

AUGUST 2014

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NIKI LAUDA

talks to Peter Jones

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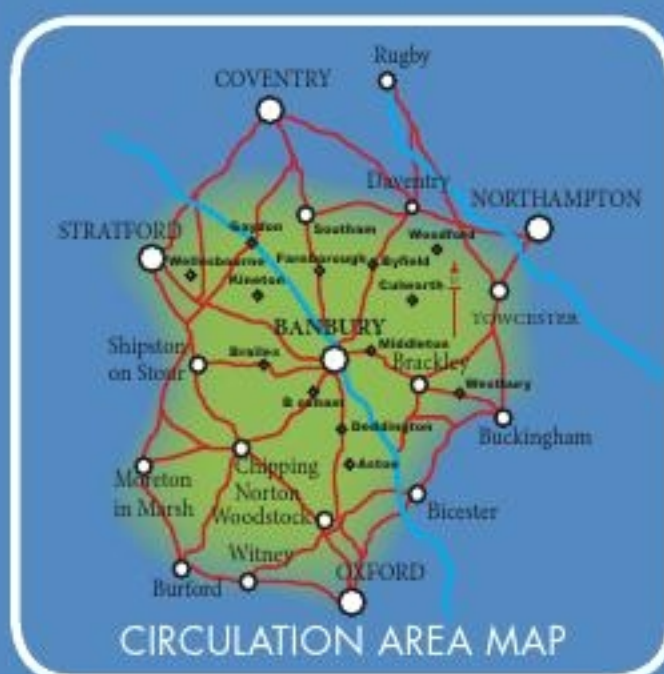


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The views of the contributors are not necessarily those of the publishers.
ISSN 1473-0472

Welcome to the August issue of *Four Shires* magazine. Our super cover picture was taken by talented photographer Roger Cooper.

By the time you read this, I will be in Spain enjoying a little break by the seaside with the family, hopefully enjoying sunshine, red wine and a good book by the beach.

For many years, when I was a nipper, our family holidays were enjoyed in a caravan, or camping, or very rarely, in a guest house on the south coast near Christchurch in Dorset. (Endorse it, I'd recommend it to anyone, ha ha...)

We would spend days on Avon Beach at a small resort called Mudeford (pronounced muddy-ford) and my mates would rib me mercilessly about a holiday in such a grubby sounding place! For those of you who know the area, and it seems there are quite a few, it is a lovely spot; there were days when it was very miserable weather wise, but I do remember the odd day or two splashing around on the beach. What sticks in my memory - and for those that know me, it will come as no surprise - were the wonderfully tasty sausage rolls and pies that came in clear cellophane wrappers with blue and red writing on the package. We would buy them in the café near the beach huts, they would be heated up in a little oven, (there were no microwaves back then) and we would tuck into them on the beach behind the gaudy wind break that stopped the sand whistling through. Some always made it into the roll however, but even with a bit of crunch they were gorgeous! Those rolls and taking a look at the saucy postcards in the shop on the beach will certainly stay with me for a long time.

In this issue, our very own Sarah Musgrove has visited Hengistbury Head and Newhaven beach, just over 'The Run' from Mudeford and her evocative story brought everything back. Read about it on page 25 this month.

This month's magazine is a 'belter,' there are a number of entertaining stories from all our regular contributors as well as some unusual little 'knibs' picked up in our new 'pub round up' section. And do take a look at the restaurant review this month - The Straw Kitchen - on page 60. This new venture has been set up by two remarkably ebullient young ladies who deserve all your support. Happy holidays!

JEREMY WILTON



ELECTRO SWING NIGHT

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Banbury Town hall
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FOUR SHIRES

WHAT'S INSIDE FOUR SHIRES THIS MONTH



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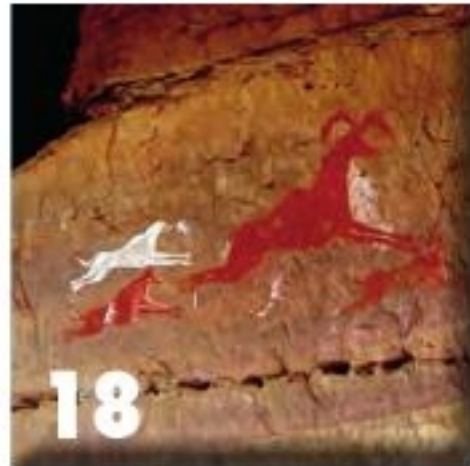
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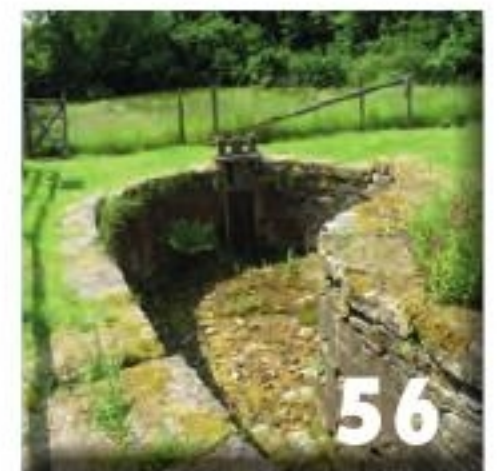
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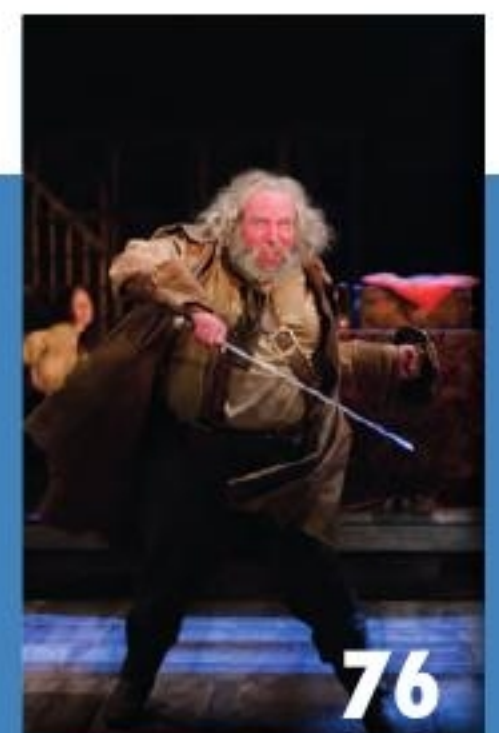
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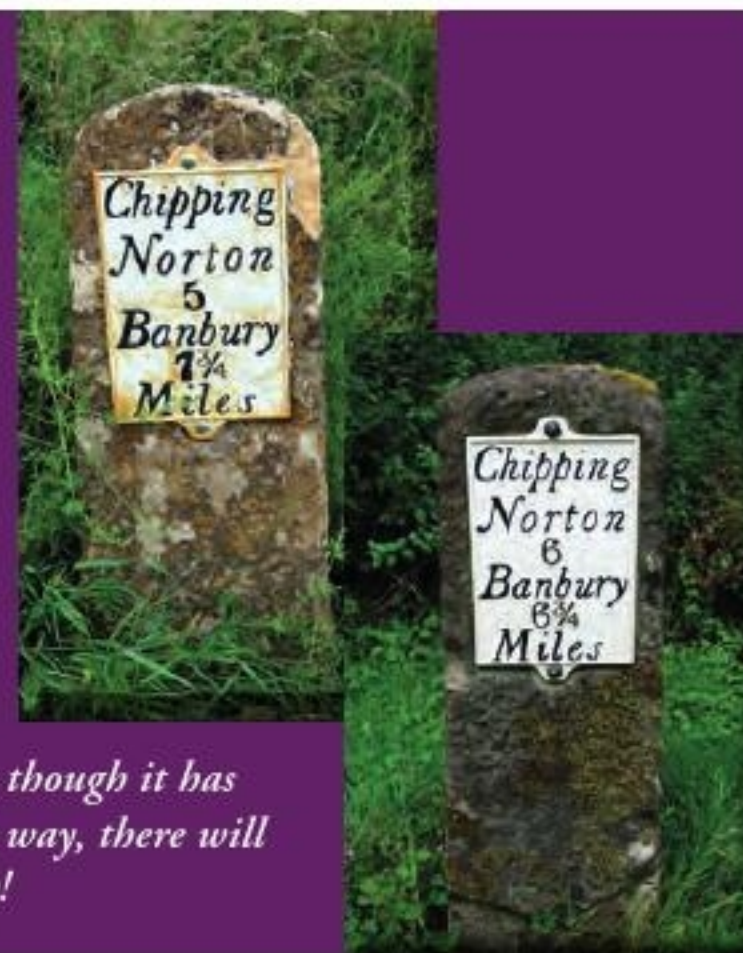
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When travelling towards Chipping Norton from Banbury dog always looks out for the fingerpost just past The Masons Arms. The sign has weathered in a pleasing way, the rust from the iron fastenings washing into the white background, giving a particularly 'gnarly' appearance. Heading out to Cornbury last month, dog noticed this other, similar sign, and thought at first that the 'Masons Arms sign' had been moved a mile further back towards Banbury. Dog thought that the sign would have to be altered to be positioned further down the road and investigated... Surprise, surprise, it was another similar, much cleaner sign... Dog had never spotted this other sign and to be fair it looks as though it has recently been renovated. Now when heading out that way, there will be two signs that he just has to look at as he passes by!



YOUR LETTERS

This lovely picture was taken in March 2012 on a trip to Banbury by Bill Glenister, son of long time subscriber Sonia who lives in Australia. The picture features Sonia's granddaughter Imogen.

Imogen and her father Bill were planning a trip to Paris from their home in Australia. Her dad Bill takes up the story: "I think she was 13 when that picture was taken. It was her idea for a trip to Paris so I thought whilst we were in the vicinity we would also go and see where her grandma grew up. We do a lot of travelling together which we both enjoy. She was fascinated by the history of the *Four Shires* area. We drove down to the Causeway in Banbury to where grandma Sonia grew up and made a phone call back to Australia to let grandma know where we were. It's a shame all the old terraced houses



were gone as we would have loved Imogen to see what it was like when Sonia was a young lady of the same age. We went for a drive out to Wroxton, then into the lovely Cotswolds. We had the best March weather you could ask for."

Many thanks for sending the picture to us Bill... Say hello to Sonia and Imogen from us - Ed



TRIUMPH

The first thing I do when getting my hands on a new issue of the Four Shires is to turn to the back to the Pictures from the Past to see if I recognise anyone!

It was quite a surprise to see a photo of my car, the Triumph Vitesse, driven by myself with my wife of a few hours as we left our wedding reception! (The bride and groom didn't stay for the evening party back then). The gentleman on the right of the three at the back of the car is John Fenemore, my best man and brother to George, better known to Four Shires' readers as "Countryman". The date was 1st May 1970 (and we are still married!).

*Thanks for the memories.
Kind regards,
Mike Lovatt*



Dog used to enjoy watching Charlie Dimmock taking part in Groundforce on BBC TV. Her rustic charms were but a fond memory until last month, when Four Shires' very own Gail Seward bumped into her and Tommy Walsh at Blenheim Flower Show. Never one to miss an opportunity Gail was snapped arm in arm with the gardening duo...

CHALLENGING SEASON FOR BANBURY UNITED...

This year's Annual General Meeting saw Banbury United supporters attend, as two years of legal restraints were lifted and the public were once again allowed into the proceedings.

Those present at the meeting heard of the difficulties that lay ahead for united in the coming season. There will be no reserve or youth team but both are expected to return in future years. It was pointed out that without more sponsorship and some success in the FA Cup and Trophy competitions problems would increase. Supporters are aware of

United's dismal record in these competitions but progress in the early rounds should be feasible.

There was good news in the fact that VAT is up to date and only £500 is owed to the Inland Revenue. This compares favourably with the problems that clubs like Hereford United and Salisbury are facing this season. Hereford are expected to join Banbury United in the Southern League Premier in the coming season.

A new ground is still a future possibility and with results and league tables featured regularly on Sky TV, sponsorship would not be a bad option for local businesses. As a

supporter of over 50 years standing, I am very much aware that a successful Banbury United would attract much bigger support. A small number of volunteers keep this special club running and it is now time for the businesses of the *Four Shires* to stand up and be counted. Last season's gates of 200-300 on Saturdays and 100 or so for midweek matches is not good enough.

Manager Edwin Stein will once again be operating on a shoestring budget and to some extent it is thanks to him and the small band of directors that the town of Banbury still has a football club.

Chris Pratt



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TENNIS CLUB'S 40TH ANNIVERSARY

Banbury West End Lawn Tennis and Squash Club (based in Adderbury) hosted a traditional 'tennis tea party' recently. A pro-am tournament was held for past and present members to celebrate their move 40 years ago from their old site in Bath Road, Banbury to the present site in Adderbury.

Thirty six members aged from 13 to 86 joined in and played in the pro-am tournament. Over 20 former players who were members in 1974 joined to watch the tennis, catch up with old friends and enjoy a traditional tennis tea.

Pictured above are the pro-am players and past members.



BIKE OXFORD

With cycling becoming more popular, a new event in Oxford is being planned for next month. The *Bike Oxford* cycling event will be held at Oxford University Rugby Club in September, with up to 1,000 cyclists expected to ride either 20, 50 or 80 miles.

The routes pass through both the city and some spectacular *Four Shires'* scenery. The event is engaging with a number of charities who see an opportunity to raise valuable funds at the event.

David Cameron, Prime Minister and MP for Witney offered his support: "I am delighted to support the Bike Oxford event. It is a brilliant boost for cycling and will bring together local people, local businesses and local food and drink producers, which can only be a good thing!"

Registration is now open at www.bikeoxford.co.uk

WILDFLOWER GRASSLAND TEAM IN THE COTSWOLDS

The national conservation project, Save Our Magnificent Meadows, welcomes two new members of staff at the Cotswolds Conservation Board.

Eleanor Reast and Katherine Holmes have joined a dedicated Cotswolds team for this £3 million project, funded primarily by the Heritage Lottery Fund.

Eleanor has worked for the RSPB in many roles, living all over the UK, from the Lizard in Cornwall up to the Cairngorms in Scotland and is pleased to return to her home in the Cotswolds.

Katherine currently lives in Charlbury and has worked in the field of ecology and nature conservation for over five years.

The Cotswolds project is set to restore the flower-rich limestone grasslands in the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty over the next three years.



SYNCHROTRON SCIENCE HELPS KING HENRY VIII'S 500 YEAR OLD WARSHIP

The Diamond Light Source in Harwell near Didcot is using its intense X-rays to help researchers refine their methods to better preserve the famous Tudor warship known as the Mary Rose. Raised from the seabed in October 1982, 437 years after she capsized and sank, the Mary Rose is the only 16th century warship on display anywhere in the world.

Scientists from Diamond are working with the Mary Rose Trust, a charity formed 40 years ago to help conserve the Tudor warship, and researchers from Daresbury Laboratory (STFC) and the University of Kent, to enhance their knowledge of the conservation process to preserve the historic timbers.

picture: at the recent open day Hazel Garrad (left) and Holly Garrad (right), both age 5, from Swindon hold some old rope from The Mary Rose.



TROOPING THE COLOUR

A *Trooping the Colour* ceremony came to Banbury last month as the 142 Squadron of the Royal Logistics Corps commemorated 216 years of military history.

A parade led by the band of the corps made its way through town in an event organised by Banbury Town Council.

Council leader Kieron Mallon said: "We made every effort to make this year's Armed Forces Day a special event. We were honoured to get one of the army's most famous bands to lead our procession and play for the trooping ceremony."

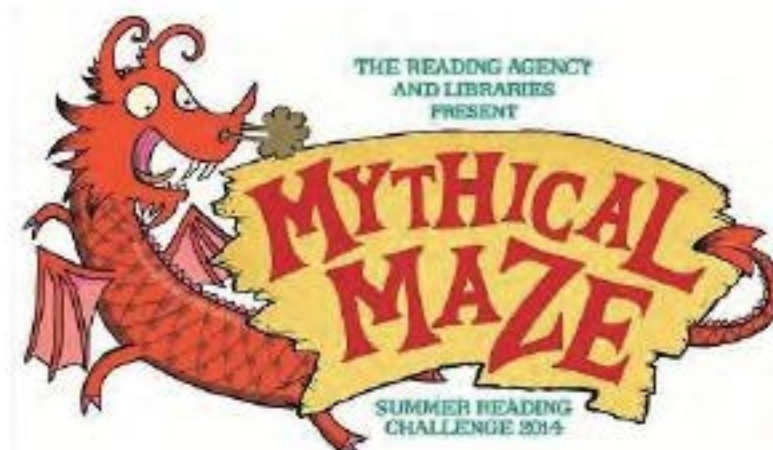
picture by Harry Rhodes, Tudor Photography

ENJOY READING?

Reading for pleasure is very important for children. The Summer Reading Challenge gets three quarters of a million children into libraries to keep up their reading skills and confidence during the long holidays.

Banbury public library has a summertime reading challenge where seniors and juniors can win prizes whilst they read...

The Junior event runs until mid September and the Senior until mid October, just



venture down to Marlborough Road in Banbury and register.

More details at www.mythical-maze.org.uk

FIELD OF BORAGE...

Whilst out and about this field of borage was spotted at Madmarton Hill near Tadmarton. Is there really enough Pimms in the world to warrant this amount of borage?



POETRY

For all Kindle readers, local author Mark Wetherby now has two publications available on Kindle.

'The Tales of Mossy Dell' - a fairy tale fantasy for young readers and 'Duncan The Kingsman', a short story that is part fiction with a smattering of fact based on The English Civil War.

Mark has also published a selection of poems, 'Mixed up Poems', one of which is reproduced here:

Cotswolds

*A Chimney stack, a puff of smoke,
cottage honeystoned.*

*A rolling hill, the water mill,
catkins on the windowsill.*

*Dry stone walls criss cross the fields, the
morning cattle pass, the lark sings in the
highest sky, the falcon zooming fast.*

*Roses around the cottage door, the trees
bend in the wind, in downstream waters
crystal clear the otter family swims.*

*The heron flies majestically, the buzzard
tends its young, new leaves appear where
all before were toppled and were flung.*

*A vixen calls in early mists the hearding
sheep pass by. A farmer's call to collie dog,
fresh smell of apple pie.*

*The tractor ploughs a hilly field where
endless treasures lie. And rabbits running
far and wide, deep in their burrows lie.*

*Road so winding, road so straight where
Roman legions trod, where salt transported
came to pass, now angler with his rod.*

*The crystal stream where trout abide and
some may stop and drink and sit amidst
the dry stone walls to meditate and think.*

*The markets known as Chippings, the
Swells and Slaughters here,
The Stows and the Moretons, Broadway
and Campden near,*

*Where artists ply their trade
and mark their legacy.
All belong to this Cotswold History.*

.....

*Who says print is going out of fashion?
You only need to look in the newsagents
for a wealth of printed, glossy
publications. So, to celebrate this, our
Proud in Print logo will be a feature in
all future issues of Four
Shires, simply because
we are proud to
still be producing
a printed product for
all our readers.*



Godswell Park

Godswell Park is a state of the art 45-bed luxury care home, providing the highest quality residential and nursing care, with single en-suite rooms enjoying extensive views



Do you have a problem?

Are you one of the numerous people in the UK today charged with looking after an elderly relative, friend or neighbour? Have you a holiday planned or perhaps a business trip that you cannot avoid and are worried about what arrangements to make to care for your loved one whilst you are away?

Are you, yourself, an elderly person who lives alone or is fiercely independent but has to go into hospital for an operation and worried about what happens before you can return home?

Perhaps you are considering your options for the future, just in case you feel you might need care and support that would not be available at home?

Have you vowed 'never to go into a nursing home'?

Godswell Park has the solution - A hotel with care

So many people think of nursing homes as only offering accommodation for elderly residents who stay for the long term, and at Godswell Park such residents are, indeed, in the majority. However, we recognise the increasing need for care and accommodation of the highest quality for residents who may just stay with us for a short time and we always try to ensure that we have a variety of rooms available for this purpose. A number of people come to stay with us for one or two weeks on a regular basis and describe us as a hotel with care. We provide peace of mind both for our resident but also, and just as importantly, for their relatives or friends who know their loved one is being well looked after while away.

What sets us apart?

We believe that our accommodation and facilities are second-to-none in the area but the environment only counts for so much when you are considering coming to stay with us. What is

really important is the attention to detail that we give to the care of our residents, whether they are with us for a week or for the longer term. Our four cornerstones of care form the basis of everything we do:

Personalised care planning

It is important that we really get to know our residents' needs, likes and dislikes so that we can ensure that we plan our care on a truly individual basis. We encourage you to come and visit us to discuss your requirements and we will also visit you in your own home or in hospital to ensure that, when you arrive at Godswell Park, everything is in place to make your first few days with us as stress-free as possible. As we get to know you better we can then develop the way that we look after you so that you know you are receiving the care and attention that has been designed specifically for you.

Dignity

Preserving one's dignity in old age is a key concern for many people as they grow older. We know this and we understand that, sometimes, the idea of coming into a communal environment, even for a short time, may fill you with foreboding. This is why all our staff – nurses, carers, catering assistants, housekeepers - are trained to the highest standards to respect your dignity and ensure that you maintain your self-esteem. We are here to support you and promote your independence – we will never 'take over' from you if there are aspects of your personal care that you wish to maintain and do for yourself.

Respect

Have you ever been addressed by your first name by people you have never met and who are obviously several generations younger than you? We find this both irritating and condescending. We believe that each resident should tell us how they wish to be addressed because this is just one

small part of the respect that we believe is due to our elderly residents. In many cultures age is venerated for the life experience that comes with living longer – we agree with that!



Choice

Why should residents be required to fit in to what suits the running of the nursing home? After all, if you were staying in a five-star hotel the staff would adapt their routines to your wishes. At Godswell Park you are enabled to:

- get up (and retire to bed) at a time of your choosing;
- take your meals when you wish, either in our restaurant or in the privacy of your own room. (If you visit our restaurant you can have a table for one or join with other residents as you wish)
- take part in as many or as few of the organised activities as interest you;
- walk in our landscaped grounds, visit our summerhouse, join our outings to places of interest, take tea on the terrace or in our conservatory;
- receive visitors and invite them to lunch, supper or one of our special afternoon teas;
- visit our sun therapy room or our cinema;
- treat yourself to a pampering session in our hair and beauty salon.

Daily life at Godswell Park

The two owners of Godswell Park work full-time on site and help ensure that standards are maintained to the level that all our staff strive to achieve for each resident. One of the directors,

Godswell Park, Church Street, Bloxham, Oxfordshire OX15 4ES



who is a fully-qualified nurse, brings with her the experience of having been an inspector with the regulatory authority and oversees the quality of nursing and personal care provided to each resident. Our manager and deputy manager are also both fully-qualified nurses and have many years of experience in similar roles in charge of the wellbeing of our residents, whilst our resident services manager ensures that you experience a fulfilling and contented stay.

Godswell Park has one of the highest staff-to-resident ratios around. Our nursing and care staff look after the physical and personal care of our residents whilst our specialist housekeeping team ensures that bedrooms and social areas are kept clean and tidy and laundry is returned immaculate. Nutrition is a very important aspect of daily life and our dedicated chefs and catering team will assist residents in choosing from the extensive menus and ensure that food is prepared and served in accordance with each resident's requirements. Our activities team comprises four people whose role it is to provide a social schedule which promotes mental and physical stimulation but who will also ensure that those who wish to remain more private are not overlooked. We never employ agency staff, which means that each of our employees gets to know the likes, dislikes and foibles of every one of our residents, we are proud of the training that each and every member of staff undergoes as part of their career with us.

Our bedrooms are of various sizes, all of them larger than the average and with en-suite bathrooms including level-access showers. Our spa baths with Jacuzzi and light therapy are situated on each floor. Each bedroom is equipped with television and direct-dial telephone, wi-fi and satellite t.v. connection.

Our three day rooms do not have televisions because they are places where our residents like to invite their guests to join them for a cup of coffee or a game of bridge. However, for major national

or sporting events our cinema offers a large screen and surround sound for those whose eyesight and hearing may not be as sharp as it was.

Our sun therapy room with its private beach is a popular place on grey days and our purpose-built beauty salon and shop, our library corner and our conservatory and summerhouse entice residents out of their bedroom either to spend some quiet time enjoying their hobby or socialising with other residents and visitors.

At Godswell Park we believe that social interaction is an important aspect of life in our care environment, and lunchtime provides the ideal opportunity for residents to enjoy a glass of sherry before their meal. The choice of menus provided by our team of chefs is regularly updated to make the most of fresh seasonal produce and locally-sourced ingredients, and continues to earn the high praise for which Godswell has become famous since we opened in 2011.



Godswell Park - a hotel with care that really cares

We hope that, by giving you a feel of what life is like at Godswell Park, we may have given you a possible solution if you are facing any of the problems that we described at the start. Whether you are looking for long-term or short-term care we are here to help. Please feel free to check out our website, call us for more information or, even better, pay us a visit so that you can see for yourself what Godswell Park has to offer and why one of our regular short-term residents describes us as 'a hotel with care, that really cares'.

If you haven't visited a care home recently, this may all sound too good to be true. But don't take our word for it, the following are some comments from residents that have been made since we have opened:

- 'Everyone so dedicated to their work and always smiling.'
- 'Everything was just as good as you said it would be, and more. As far as Mrs X is concerned it made her hospital stay and recuperation much easier knowing that her husband was well looked after.'
- 'You enabled me to come home with confidence. My care was of an outstanding level and I very much enjoyed my stay.'
- 'Everyone was so kind and friendly – both residents and staff couldn't have done more to make me welcome. It was my first experience of staying in a Home, and I would definitely recommend Godswell Park as being the very best.'
- 'I was immediately struck by the welcome I was given – smiles from everyone and no problem too difficult.'
- 'I wish to thank you and your staff for all the excellent care I had at Godswell. I have returned home confident and able to look after myself with ease.'





THE LORD LIEUTENANT OF NORTHAMPTONSHIRE RETIRES

Lady Juliet Townsend gave a tea party in her garden at Newbottle Manor to mark her retirement as Lord Lieutenant of Northamptonshire. After 16 years as Lord Lieutenant she celebrated with 350 guests representing the Armed Forces, Police, Fire Service and many charitable organisation based in the county. Music was provided by the Northamptonshire Music and Performing Arts Trust Brass Band and the Kettering Sea Cadets Band.

1: Kettering Sea Cadets Band; 2: Mrs Margaret Behan; 3: the outgoing Lord Lieutenant Lady Juliet Townsend with Mr David Laing the incoming Lord Lieutenant; 4: Northamptonshire Music & Performing Arts Trust Brass Band; 5: Mr Christopher Getley with Mrs Eleanor Bland; 6: Mr Rob Johnson and his fiancée Miss Tania Cherry; 7: Deputy Lieutenants Mrs Anne Goodman & Colonel John Royle; 8: Mr Bruce Bailey and Lady Juliet Townsend; 9: Miss Elizabeth

Knight and Lady Helen Boswell; 10: Edwina Brash and her daughter Lucy; 11: Miss Alice Townsend with Mr Patrick Martin; 12: Mr & Mrs Richard Sermon; 13: Sir Peter Ellwood, Deputy Lieutenant, with Lady Ellwood; 14: Mr & Mrs Johnnie Amos; 15: Group picture of all the guests; Mrs Pam Reynolds and Mr David Reynolds Deputy Lieutenant pictures by Tudor Photography



MAPS

Ronan Badel

A big hit in this shop last Christmas was *Maps* by Aleksandra and Daniel Mizielinski. Any child who enjoyed that book will certainly have fun with *Maps Activity Book*, a collection of colouring and drawing activities for three year olds upwards. (Very suitable for up to 10 years old in fact). Fun and stimulating.

BOOKS *for your* BOOKSHELVES

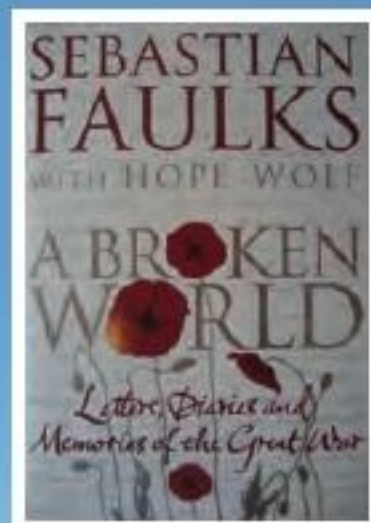
CIDER WITH ROSIE

Laurie Lee

This is Laurie Lee's centenary year and a special edition of *Cider with Rosie* has been published to mark the occasion. With an introduction by Michael Morpurgo and delightful illustrations by Mark Hearld this is a lovely thing and will bring many news devotees to Lee's works. £16.99



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Hope Wolf*

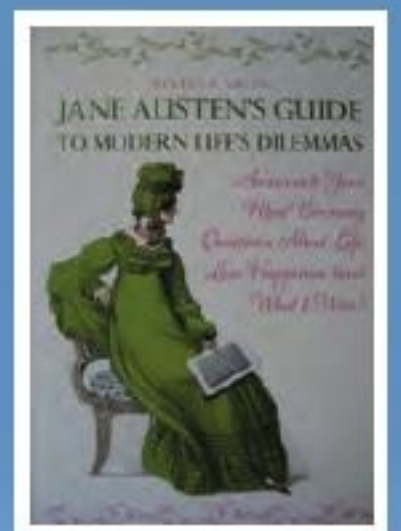
We have in the shop copies of *A Broken World*, a selection of letters, diaries and memories of the First World War, compiled, edited and signed by Sebastian Faulks with Hope Wolf. The contributions come from people on all sides of the conflict, those in combat and those left at home. Some of the contributors are already known to us, Sasoon for example, others are letters and accounts from ordinary people who were seeking some way to express the horror of their experiences.

£20

GUIDE TO MODERN
LIFE'S DILEMMAS

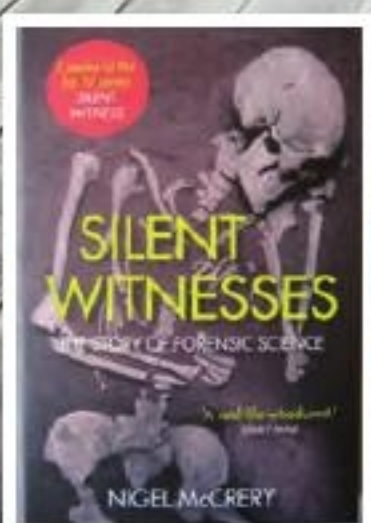
Jane Austen

We have been laughing at Jane Austen's *Guide to Modern Life's Dilemmas* in which Rebecca Smith has considered the burning questions of our age and applied her mind to what Jane Austen, or indeed, one of her heroines, might have to say on the subject. 'How can I delete a contact on facebook without causing offence?' is one such question. 'How to balance children and a career?' could be another. Neither of which are eventualities that Jane herself would have needed to deal with but common sense can prevail in any age and this book does so with a certain wry humour. £8.99

SILENT
WITNESSES

Nigel McCrery

Nigel McCrery is the creator of the tv series *Silent Witness* and in his book *Silent Witnesses* he takes us through the amazing forensic developments and techniques that have transformed modern crime detection. Using the real crimes that have provided breakthroughs in forensic science this fascinating book is more gripping than any crime fiction. £8.99

VIRGINIA WOOLF; ART LIFE
AND VISION

Frances Spalding

Virginia Woolf; Art Life and Vision is an account of the life of Virginia Woolf, with paintings and photographs of the people and places that were important to her. The author, Frances Spalding is an art critic and a leading authority on the Bloomsbury group. She had illustrated Woolf's life and world with over a hundred documents, photographs and paintings sourced from public and private collections. A fascinating insight into one of our greatest writers. £22.50





MOUSE TOWN ARRIVES AT FAIRYTALE FARM

Mouse Town at Fairytale Farm near Chipping Norton is now open! This beautifully crafted model village is located inside a former stable building and features a quaint English rural town, complete with shops, church, houses, village pond and jail. But what makes it different from other model villages is that it is home to a family of mice who can be seen going about their daily business. They always try to do something different at Fairytale Farm!

Find out more at www.fairytalefarm.co.uk.

THE MILL SUMMER PARTY

*The Mill Arts Centre,
Banbury
2nd August, 12pm - 7pm*

Come down to the Mill Arts centre and celebrate summer with the Mill Summer Party, as well as the launch of the new Artist Studios at the Mill.

For more information visit:
www.themillartscentre.co.uk

THE PET SHOW

*Stoneleigh Park, Warwickshire
2nd & 3rd August, 10am - 5pm*

A national event dedicated to the British public and their pets, the launch show last year had over 17,000 visitors.

Packed with hundreds of attractions for the whole family to enjoy, The Pet Show 2014 is the biggest event of its kind showcasing the very best of the UK's pet industry has to offer.

Adults £15.40; Under 7's free;
family ticket (2 Adults + 2
Child) £40.48

www.thepetshow.co.uk



UPTON HOUSE MILLIONAIRE'S HOUSE PARTY

*Upton House, Banbury
2nd & 3rd August, from 12 noon*

Join the guests of Lord and Lady Bearsted for a weekend in the country and discover more about the high life of the 1930s, with music, dance and costume demonstrations.

Find out how the family made their fortune in an exhibition to be held in the Squash Court Gallery exhibition. Stepping inside the house you'll find yourself surrounded by Lord Bearsted's internationally important art and porcelain collections, with work by artists such as Canaletto and Hogarth.



Lady Bearsted was passionate for developing the gardens with designer Kitty Lloyd Jones. The sweeping lawns lead to a series of terraces and beautiful herbaceous borders leading to a mirror pool.

For more information visit
www.nationaltrust.org.uk or
call 01295 670266.

ARTSPACE

*Compton Verney
2nd - 29th August, 11am - 4pm*

Get your children creative by using clay to design a model of their head, hands or feet. Place it on a plinth to add to an installation of body parts.

Visit www.comptonverney.org.uk or call 01926 645 500 for more information.



PANTALOONS' HISTORY OF BRITAIN

*Batsford Arboretum, 2nd August,
5.30pm and Waterperry Gardens,
21st August, 6pm*

Join madcap theatre group, The Pantaloon, who put their own inimitable spin on the History of Britain! From Harold and William the Conqueror failing to see eye to eye, to Henry VIII doubting five marriages are enough, the actors present a

Batsford ARBORETUM



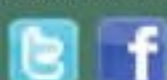
*Visit Batsford for
family fun and summer
walks, beautiful plants,
scrumptious food and
fabulous gifts.*

The Big Batsford Bug Hunt. Throughout August.
Discover the creepy crawlies hidden in the undergrowth and win a special prize.

The Pantaloon's History of Britain. Saturday 2nd August at 5.30pm.
Enjoy high drama in this hilarious, hysterical romp through the last two thousand years of history. Suitable for all the family.

**Call 01386 701441 to book or find out more by visiting
www.batsarb.co.uk**

Batsford Arboretum and Garden Centre, Batsford, Moreton-in-Marsh, Gloucestershire GL56 9AB. Tel 01386 701441. Email arboretum@batsfordfoundation.co.uk. www.batsarb.co.uk



comical, energetic and chaotic complete history of Britain.

Gates open at 5pm for picnics and no seating is provided so please bring a low backed picnic chair or rug.

Adults £10; children £7.50; family (2 adults, 2 children) £32. For more information visit www.thepantaloon.co.uk

DEAD RAT ORCHESTRA

The Cut - A Canal Tour
Holywell Music Room, Oxford

Raw, elemental and poignant with a love of adventure. Dead Rat Orchestra's performances feature flailing axes, sweat, salt and sawdust. This summer Dead Rat Orchestra undertake a unique 273 mile tour travelling exclusively by waterway from London to Bristol. The trio will eat, sleep and live on the canal. Renowned for their vivid performances and experimental approaches to folk and roots, *The Cut* tour will present a new challenge for the trio.

Tickets £10. Visit: www.deadratorchestra.co.uk



SPLAT PLAY RANGERS

Culworth Cricket Field
Northamptonshire
5th - 19th August

Give your child the opportunity to take part in some amazing sports and activities. A free, informal play session run by South Northamptonshire Council in association with Sure Start. Inflatable Play: 5th August; Water Play: 12th August; Free Play 19th August. Ages 2 - 11. Entry is free. Call 01327 322277 or visit www.southnorthants.gov.uk/SPLAT for more information.



CHASTLETON HOUSE BAT WALK

Chastleton, nr Moreton-in-Marsh
8th August, 7:30pm - 9:30pm

An exciting and thrilling opportunity to learn, see and hear the bats at Chastleton. The evening will include a informative half hour talk and then an opportunity to explore the garden, park and churchyard with bat detectors. You can learn about all the different species of bat and hear the different sounds and squeaks they make with the guidance of the bat experts.

There are a limited number of places available so don't forget to book early to avoid disappointment.

Adults £10, children £5.
Call 01494 755560 for more information.

THE MEDIEVAL GLOUCESTER SHOW

The Bowling Green behind
Gloucester City Museum
9th - 10th August, from 11am

Breathtaking swordplay, archery, re-enactments and games promise a fun-filled day out for all history buffs and family. The two day celebration of *Gloucester through the Middle Ages* will feature a whole host of activities to keep you entertained.

Weekend tickets cost £6, £5 for concessions and £12 for a family of four, while day tickets cost £4, £3 for concessions and £9 for a family. For more information visit: www.venues.gloucester.gov.uk/Freetime/Museums/events

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BATTLE PROMS

*win your tickets
with Four Shires!*

The perfect summer celebration returns to Warwickshire on Saturday 16th August, as the ever popular Battle Proms makes its 4th annual appearance in the grounds of Ragley Hall.

In addition to a full orchestral programme of sublime classical music, this unique open-air picnic concert features a carefully choreographed and highly emotive Spitfire aerial display and stunning firework finale, all in a picturesque setting

overlooking the lake at Ragley.

This year the thrilling mounted skill-at-arms display by an expert cavalry troop will be carried out in

WW1 regalia to mark the 100th anniversary of the start of the First World War, just one of many elements in the

2014 programme that will pay homage to this important historical anniversary.

And of course there will be a rousing rendition of the Battle Proms signature piece - Beethoven's Battle Symphony - performed as he intended with the full complement of 193 live firing cannon providing a thunderous percussion!

Widely regarded as one of the most exciting summer proms concerts in the country, this is an event that fans return to year after year, to enjoy a romantic evening as a couple, a memorable night out with friends or for a significant celebration.

We have three pairs of tickets to give away worth £80 per pair. All you need to do is send your name and email address to copy@fourshires.co.uk by 10th August.

Please note we cannot take entries without an email address, as winners' tickets need to be delivered by email.

For more information, or to book tickets, please visit www.battleproms.com or call on 01432 355 416.



MIKRON THEATRE

*Various locations
14th - 20th August*

Established in 1972, Mikron is the UK's most prolific small scale theatre company, touring on a narrowboat in the summer months and by road in the autumn Mikron can travel to every type of venue entertaining audiences that others cannot.

Uniquely British, this summer Mikron will entertain you with stories of WWI in 'Troupers' and follow Harvey Granelli travelling the globe on an epic quest... to find the very best ingredients for ice cream!

For full information visit www.mikron.org.uk

MAKE IT REEL

*Warwick Arts Centre
15th August, 5.30pm*

The world premiere of the short films made by this year's participants of *Make it Reel*, a summer film school where the challenge is to make a five-minute film in five days. Tickets are free but must be booked through the Warwick Art Centre Box Office, Call 0247652 4524 or visit www.warwickartscentre.co.uk

WOW! EXHIBITION

*Gloucester City Museum
From 16th August, 10am - 5pm*

Discover platypus and hippopotamus, get stuck into an array of hands-on activities and much more in the amazing WOW! natural history exhibition. It is bound to amaze and astound visitors of all ages.

Call 01452 396131 or visit www.venues.gloucester.gov.uk/Freetime/Museums

MARTY MACDONALD'S FARM

*Mill Arts Centre
24th August, 4pm*

Join the adventure to help Marty, Pongo the Pig, Molly-Moo the Cow and Sheena the Sheep rescue their farm from Crafty and the Crows.

Sing along to your favourite nursery rhymes in a live, interactive puppet show featuring children's TV's Justin Fletcher as the Voice of Pongo the Pig and Nicole Davis as the Voice of Molly-Moo the Cow.

Suitable for 3-7 years. Tickets £7/£2. Visit www.themillartscentre.co.uk for more information.

AN AUDIENCE WITH LEN GOODMAN

*Cheltenham Town Hall
29th August, 8pm*

Open to all, join *Strictly Come Dancing* judge Len as he tells his wonderful life stories from

humble beginnings to the star studded lifestyle he leads now. Tickets £20. Call 01865 868888 or email info@natd.org.uk

BANBURY STREET ORGAN FESTIVAL & BRITISH TOWN CRIERS CHAMPIONSHIP

*Banbury Town Centre
6th September*

Over the last few years this event has grown in stature, colour and sound.

Organ grinders travel from all over the country to help collect money for a local worthy cause, this year's being *The Friends of Frank Wise School*. Listen to the melodious sound of the street organs, see the organists dressed in magnificently flamboyant Victorian costumes.

As if not to be outdone, the town criers take up a prominent position in the festival coming from the far corners of Great Britain.

Call 01295 250340 or visit www.banbury.gov.uk



THE BIG FEASTIVAL

*presented by Jamie Oliver and Alex James
at Alex James' Farm, Kingham, The Cotswolds*

29th - 31st August

The Big Feastival has announced a jam-packed, fun-filled programme of entertainment that all the family can enjoy.

Jamie Oliver and Alex James present The Big Feastival that returns with its best line-up yet. This year's headliners are *Fatboy Slim* on Saturday 30th and *Jamie Cullum* on Sunday 31st. It wouldn't be *The Big Feastival* without the UK's favourite chefs taking to the stage. Joining Jamie will be Gennaro Contaldo, Monica Galetti, Gizzi Erskine, Rachel Khoo and Levi Roots to name just a few.

For more information and to purchase tickets visit:
www.thebigfeastival.com or call 0844 995 9673



THAME FOOD FESTIVAL

27th September

Raymond Blanc, Adam Simmonds, Sophie Grigson and a fabulous double act from the boys who bake, Edd Kimber and John Waite, winners of BBC Two's the Great British Bake Off. They will be one of the highlights at this landmark event in the food calendar. For full information and tickets visit www.thamefoodfestival.co.uk



CAN YOU HELP?

*Adderbury Fireworks
Saturday 8th November
Bo Peep Farm, Adderbury*

This fundraiser, in aid of the village school, relies on local business sponsors. Organisers are in need of volunteers and marshalls on the day, as well as two floodlight towers and generators, and some two-way radios.

*Please call Kerry Davison
on 01295 812324
or e-mail: ptfa@christopher-rawlins.co.uk
if you can help*



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www.banburyantiquescentre.co.uk

Barn Farm Plants, Upper Wardington, Banbury, OX17 1SN
(3 miles from M40 J11)
01295 750580

THE ARTY BIT

Fighting to paint the town red!

A new European Union proposal could stop the production of cadmium paints: the bright reds, yellows and oranges that have been on many artists' palletes since the mid 1800s. The reason is that one

EU member has raised the objection to the continued use of cadmium pigments. This is based not on concern for the companies that make the paint or the artists that use them, but to stop the pigment entering the water system. Cadmium is a heavy metal pigment and is highly poisonous when inhaled or eaten. To add weight to their objection, the union members maintain that by cleaning brushes in the sink or by tipping painting water down the drain, cadmium may enter the waste water treatment plants and end up in the slurry. When the slurry is spread on farmland, the crops absorb the cadmium and this may lead to an increased risk in exposure humans via the food chain.

Of course artists aren't the only users of cadmiums, but they will suffer the consequences if the ban went ahead. Batteries contain cadmium and over the years, can pose a greater risk to the environment. It would appear that

artists are on the receiving end of a battle intended for much bigger groups of people in industry, but should the ban go ahead in the next few years, artists will suffer.

The consultation ends in September, but if artists can show that they dispose of cadmiums safely, then the paint may still be allowed to be manufactured. It's not too late to have your say though. If you would like to comment on the proposed ban, go to: www.echa.europa.eu/restrictions-under-consideration



artclass

with
barry whitehouse

THE ARTERY
PARSONS STREET



THE ARTERY

The Artery, Parsons Street, Banbury has a free 45 minute Art Demonstration on Saturday 2nd August: painting like Bob Ross. This goes ahead at 11:00am.

Regular weekday watercolour workshops including 'Painting a Pink Gerbera', 'Paris Street Scene', 'Harbour Village at Dusk', and in our acrylic classes 'Gate and Stone Wall' and 'Old Man of Hoy'.

We also have a Saturday workshop on 16th August entitled 'Simple Figure Drawing' as well as fortnightly drawing class on 'Rugged Mountain Scene' and 'One Point Perspective'.

Call 01295 275150 to book your place or for more information or visit www.thearteryonline.co.uk to see all our workshops.



THE ASHMOLEAN

Until 31st August

The Ashmolean, Oxford is holding an exhibition entitled Joseph Beuys & Jorg Immendorff: Art Belongs To The People! Jorg Immendorff joined the Düsseldorf Academy of Art in 1963 as a theatre design student but changed course so he could study under Joseph Beuys - an established figure of the post-war avant-garde. They shared a common interest in contemporary politics and social issues, and a belief that art had the potential to change how people

think and live. The 50 works on display - all produced after 1968 - reveal the lifelong artistic dialogue between the pair. The exhibition runs until the end of the month.

HILLIER GARDEN CENTRE
BANBURY

Sunday 10th August

Hillier Garden Centre, Banbury is holding a 'Watercolour Class' in their Café Hazel area. The theme is 'The Seaside'. Spaces are limited so please call 01295 275150 to book a place. The workshop is aimed at beginners and runs from 10:30am-1pm and costs £10.

DIARY

artsurgery

URBAN ART: *Echoes of the past?*

Urban art and graffiti is a common sight in our towns and cities throughout the world.

With Banksy murals going for £354,000 ('Kissing Coppers' in February 2014), urban art is big business, but is it such a new concept? Is making a statement, political or otherwise, by painting on walls just a 21st Century form of art?

Let me take you back in time to 4,000BC... to the Neolithic period and the art that was created there.

What is Neolithic Art?

Consisting mainly of cave paintings and engravings on the cave floor or on rocks.

These are known as Petroglyphs from the Greek Petros (stone) and Glyphein (to carve). The earliest forms of art are rudimentary finger drawings in soft clay on the rock surface. Then came engraving using sharp flint on the rock surface. Different rock types were used to give the Neolithic artists different texture and colour. The palette was severely limited as all paint was made from ground rocks.

What did they paint with?

Different rock types gave different coloured paints. If these were heated, another colour could be produced. Ochre - (from the Greek word 'Ochros', light) comes from aluminium silicate clays tinted with ferric hydroxides. These give a yellow-brown (yellow ochre) in their natural state or when heated turn the ferric oxide into iron oxides giving red to red-brown pigments (red ochre). Black was made from either charcoal or carbon (burning juniper or pine). White was made from either kaolin, mica or chalk.

Neolithic artists would bind the pigment with saliva, animal fat, ear wax or blood! This would help paint stick to the wall of the cave. There is not much evidence that the Neolithic artists used paintbrushes. We know that they used their fingers, and some scholars believe they even have used a chewed stick end! The paint would be much thicker than the kind found in a tube. Obviously, working in caves to paint is very dark and would be impossible to see without the use of artificial lighting. We can say with confidence that lamps were used as there are 85 certain and 31 probable Palaeolithic lamps that have been discovered. These worked by burning animal fats.



Were there just cave paintings?

There are several types of Neolithic art:

Petroglyph - Images incised into rock

Pictograph - Images painted onto rock

Petroform - Rocks or stones stacked or arranged into shapes/patterns

Why did they do it?

There are several theories as to why cave art exists: Man could have been marking the moment, remembering the past or dreaming of the future. It has also been suggested that symbols like these were man's earliest form of communication. Look at what was painted: bison, horses, aurochs, deer, patterned lines (finger fluting), and hands - all things that people could relate to and understand. Human figures were seldom painted and one theory is that it was a religious taboo to paint the human form. Another is that they were not the focus of the symbolism - animals were painted in detail yet the painted human form was very basic. It is thought animals were painted to ensure a successful hunt, to show a successful hunt or to protect the community.

Hands appear in a variety of styles and sizes. Some are as small as a two year old but are painted high on the wall of the cave. One modern theory is that testosterone fuelled boys created most of the cave art. This contradicts the theory that it was created by tribal spiritual leaders and healers produced it. But does it make sense that teenagers created such works? Cave art really does tend to mirror today's artwork created on walls - graffiti.

"Today, boys draw the testosterone subjects of an automobile, fighter jet, missiles...all the things they associate with the adrenalin of success" - R. Dale Guthrie, Author of 'The Nature Of Paleolithic Art'

Young people and other social groups are often excluded from making decisions in today's society, yet this doesn't mean that they have no opinion or do not understand what is happening. There is no outlet for them to have their say or let their voice be heard, so often they have to take to urban art to express their views.

As the Neolithic artists used symbols to make things easy to understand, our modern world does exactly the same today. Even though we have many ways of communicating today, symbolism still plays a very significant role in our daily lives. Some are deeply significant, others help us with our day to day tasks - toilet door signs, road signs, map legends - all use simple symbolism to communicate messages. So while we may think we have the edge on communicating and have many ways of doing so by text, email, Tweets, or letter writing, many of the signs we see in our day to day life hark back to our Neolithic ancestors who used simple images to convey information.

These are the places left where you can see cave art:

Creswell Crags, Nottinghamshire, UK

Lascaux, France

Pech Merle, near Cabrerets, France

La Marche in Lussac-les-Chateaux, France

Font de Gaume, Dordogne Valley

Cave of Altamira, Cuevas de El Castillo, Spain



A super new antiques centre has recently set up near Banbury, right next door to the Barn Farm Plants Garden Centre in Wardington.

Banbury Antiques Centre, run by Peter Appleton, has been trading since the start of June this year and is already looking to double its size.

"We have 34 traders here at the moment," said Peter "and a waiting list of over another 40. We also need to expand as stock is turning round very quickly."

Traders are currently housed in separate units in a redecorated barn that covers over 2000 square feet. "We are just itching to double the size of the centre and hope to do so before autumn gets here," he said.

Peter decided to start up the centre at Wardington as it was something he had always been interested in. "Ever since I was a young child, I've enjoyed searching through jumble sales and just loved visiting junk shops and then antiques shops as I got older. I loved the look of the barn here in Wardington as it was a lovely blank canvas.

We've decorated the centre as we would like, we haven't had to adapt premises to how we would want it."

The centre at Wardington is very bright and airy and has the advantage of generous parking and a café housed in Barn Farm Plants premises just next door to the antiques centre.

"We have a mixture here," said Peter. "There are antique sellers and artisan furniture restorers and



we have items that range from an Edwardian reclining couch to beautifully restored furniture.

"We had a lady who came in the other day and spotted some of the silverware on sale. She recognised it immediately as old railway silverware and this prompted a story about her relatives and some documents

she was thinking of taking to the Railway Museum in York. It illustrates why I love the antiques business so much...it is living history right there in front of your eyes. The lady did visit the museum with her old records and the curator was extremely grateful."

When you are next in the vicinity of Wardington, make a special effort to visit both Banbury Antique Centre and Barn Farm Plants - we can guarantee that you won't be disappointed. ❖



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Our jewellery specialist is taking appointments on:

Thursday 7 August

Thursday 4 September

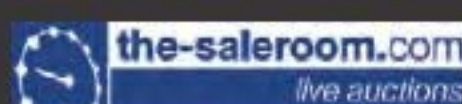
Please call 01295 817777 to book an appointment.

Or email our experts

For an indication of value please email full details and good quality images.

valuations@hollowaysauctioneers.co.uk

For multiple items, we can arrange for one of our valuers to visit your property following an initial consultation.



Next sale
Antiques and Fine Art
Tuesday 23 September



49 Parsons Street, Banbury, Oxfordshire OX16 5NB
Tel: 01295 817777 Email: enquiries@hollowaysauctioneers.co.uk

www.hollowaysauctioneers.co.uk



Janella Horne painted her cat during her exhibition at the National Herb Centre

WARWICKSHIRE

open studios



Brian Unitt was displaying wonderful hand crafted jewellery at Ditchford Farm near Shipston Stour

Since 2002 Warwickshire Open Studios has helped local artists and designer makers exhibit and sell their work directly to the public from their studios and a host of other amazing venues. It has grown to become the biggest exhibition of unique and original art and crafts with over 320 artists and makers in 144 venues in and around the towns and villages of our leafy county.



AJ Littlewood representing the Tysoe young artists and Tysoe primary school



Dogtastic portraits at Tysoe's Got Artistic Talent, by Shirley Cherry



Ditchford was also the venue for Alice Shepherd and her quirky jugs and vases



Sue Sanderson (left) and Dinny Jones (right) were displaying their accomplished painting at The Swan Inn Hotel at Kineton





Penny Varley and her creations in clay, displaying at Tysoe's Got Artistic Talent



Heather Bailey with her work on display at the Richard Harvey Collection in Shipston on Stour



Melanie Charles with her funky farmyard fun and taste of the country pictures, at Tysoe's Got Artistic Talent



Lis Mann showing her work at the Richard Harvey Collection in Shipston on Stour

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FINE ART & ANTIQUES

Saturday 27th September 2014

Entries close on Friday 22nd August.

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• Eric Ravilious (1903-1942), 'Aldeburgh Bathing Machines' signed and dated Aug '38, watercolour.
(Detail image) Estimate: £40,000 - 60,000

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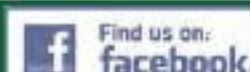
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parched artists



Parched artists are a collective of artists from the Banbury area. They range from painters to printers to jewellery makers and everything in between. Last month they held an exhibition at The Mill Arts Centre in Banbury.

top: artwork by Hayley Jane, Emily Russell & Sophie May; above: artwork by Jake Element, Orela Vokes & Gena Mary Johns; above right: Jake Element, Hayley Jane, PatrickJPC from Strange Clothing Co, Paul Bowen, Jason from Tales of Black Eyed Jack, Orela Vokes, Emma from Notes Jewellery, Kate from Cotton On, Emily Russell, Maisie Whittle & Lisa Marie Grigsby; right: detail from Hayley Jane; far right: art, jewellery and t-shirts from Patrick JPC from Strange Clothing Co, Emma from Notes Jewellery, Kate from Cotton On & Tanicha Boneham



Fiona Pancheri has spent a lifetime creating art in many different forms and styles. She has worked within life drawing, portraits, stage costume design, painting and other crafts such as making slate cheese boards, creating Fair Isle knitting projects and painting doorknobs.

Recently, in the last five years, Fiona found her inspiration in becoming a mosaic artist using a wide range of colours. She now almost exclusively makes mosaics for the home and garden.

Her passion began on a two day mosaic course at the Mill Arts Centre in Banbury. She does her own research and has visited works of mosaic art in Greece, Rome, Marrakesh and the Gaudi mosaics in Barcelona.

After doing a mosaic course with Martin Cheek, one of the UK's most prolific mosaic artists, Fiona focussed her talent on creating mosaic designs inspired by nature such as animals, birds, trees and fish.

The mosaics are made from beautiful tiles from around Europe made of glass, ceramics and Smalti and Millefiori Italian tiles.

As her talent has developed her technique has also to create a very professional standard of finish and she has begun to experiment with new mosaic backings like aluminium.

Living in the village of Chipping Warden Fiona constantly finds inspiration from the countryside. She is actually continuing a tradition that started in the village some 1000 years ago; Chipping Warden used to be the home of a large roman villa where there would have been many pieces of mosaic artwork. Fiona's reputation is growing, she has been asked to run courses by Sulgrave Manor and the Cool Contours Arts Centre. She exhibits her work there and at the Forge Arts Centre, Culworth. She is now an established artist for Oxfordshire and Northamptonshire Art week. Her next exhibition is at the Bell Plantation near Towcester in September.

Fiona has rapidly developed an audience for home and garden bespoke pieces for both businesses and individuals such as wall plaques, floor designs, garden tables, decorative patio tiles and pictures. She is creating her own Christmas cards this year and constantly has new ideas. Her current commission is for a garden plaque of a jumping horse.

To find out more about Fiona's creations visit her website at:
www.marvellousmosaics.co.uk

Story by Olly Haynes



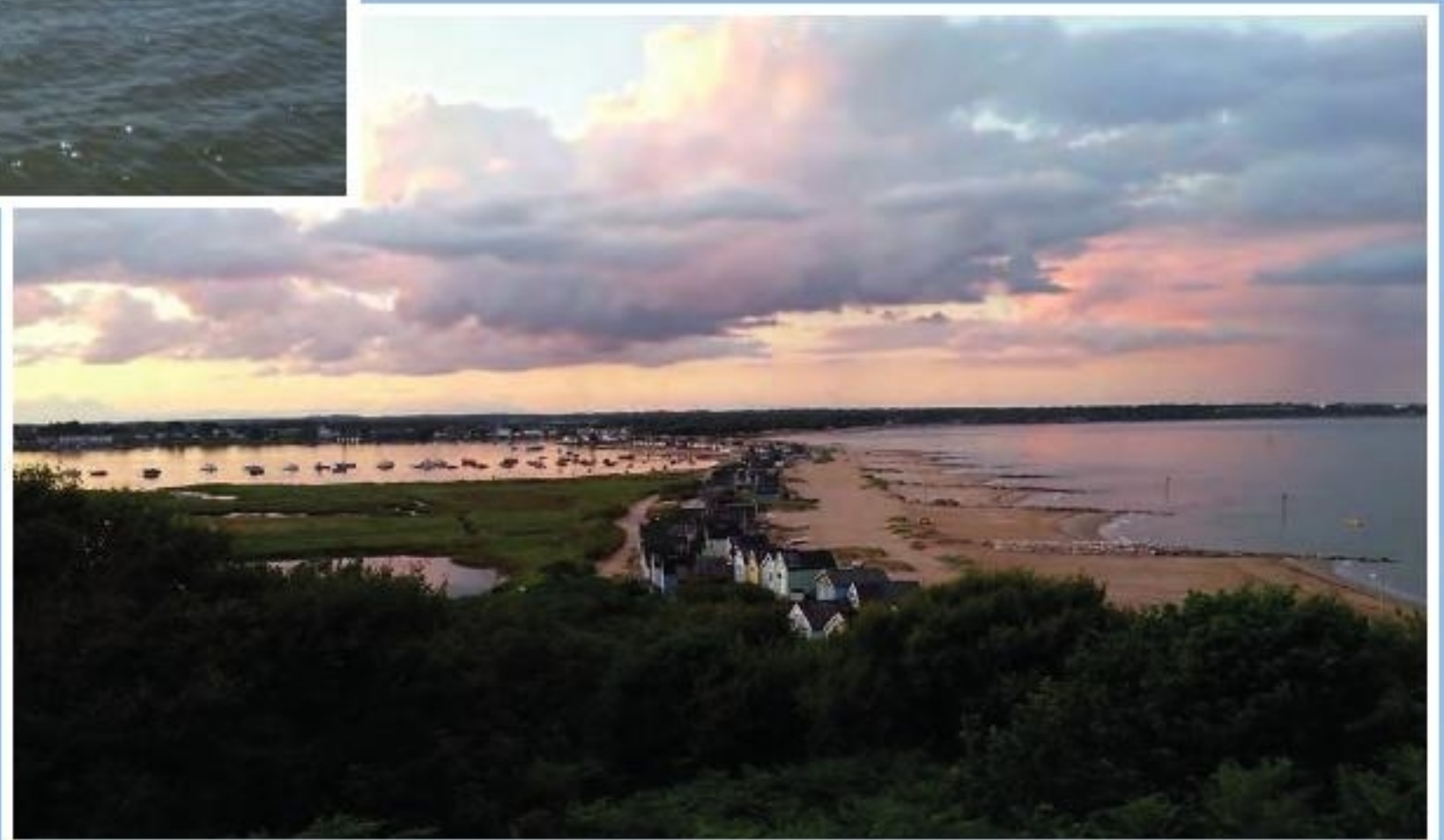
IN *hut* PURSUIT



When it comes to finding a location where you can be at one with the sun, sea and sand, we frequently forget how fantastic the UK shores can be. *Four Shires*' Sarah Musgrove was lucky enough to experience the rest and rejuvenation provided by such a getaway in the beach huts at Mudeford, Dorset.

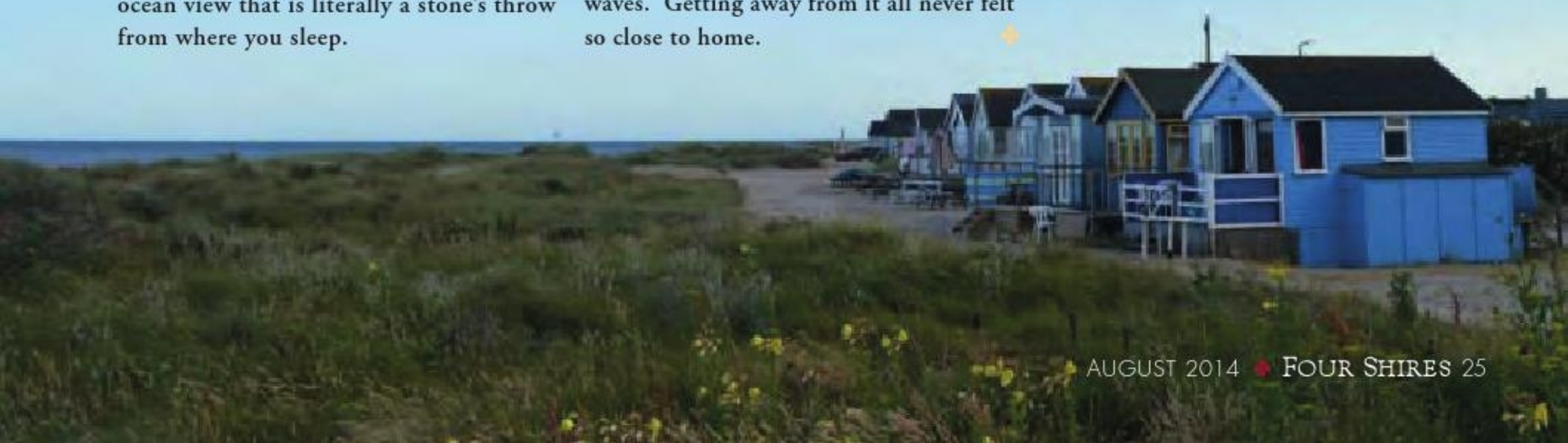
Around 330 beach huts line the Mudeford Spit near Christchurch, and they are among the only huts in the UK where you may sleep overnight, between the months of March and October.

With a destination drive-time of around two to three hours, depending on where you are based in the *Shires*; a seaside break at the huts means no exchanging currency or having to remember your passport. In fact, with most huts running on solar power and sharing the local facilities, you'll be living off only the bare essentials, while basking in the ocean view that is literally a stone's throw from where you sleep.



Yet you won't find anywhere else as peaceful and familiar-feeling as this community of huts. With many of the huts' owners being long-term residents, dogs and children run free along the vast beach that manages to never feel overcrowded - something you won't find on another English beach this side of August.

Think long, sun-soaked hours, daily BBQs and candlelit evenings watching the waves. Getting away from it all never felt so close to home.



Gower Peninsula

three hours

The Gower Peninsula is known as one of the UK's most beautiful and unspoilt spots. Situated in the south of Wales, rolling hills and coastline mean that from almost wherever you stand you soak up a breath-taking sea view. It is truly the place to appreciate a landscape untouched and the perfect solution for those who enjoy hiking, beach combing, or just soaking up nature. With its longstanding reputation, you wouldn't believe that it only stretches 16 miles across!

TRADITIONAL: CAMPING

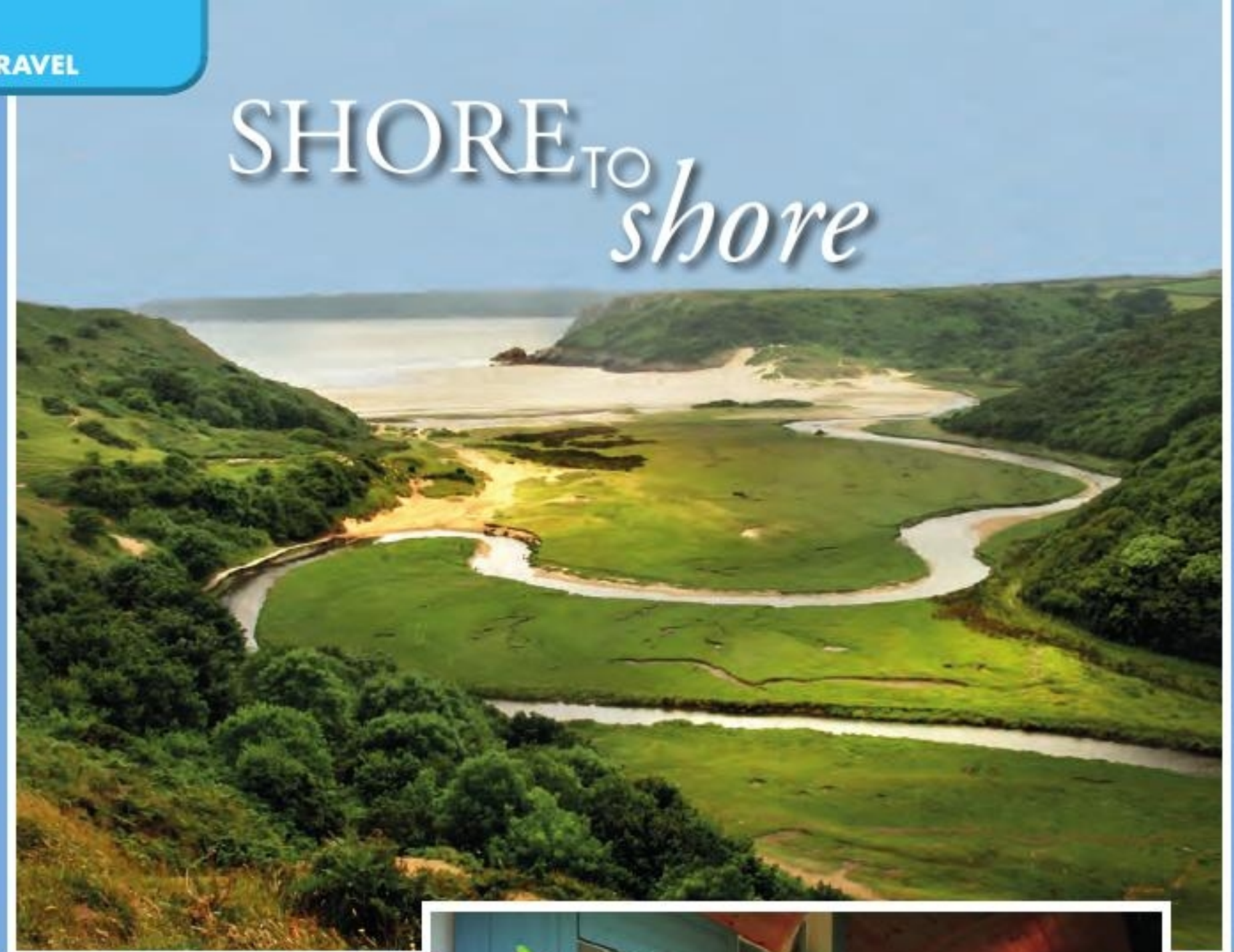
Anyone who knows the Gower Peninsula well will know that it's all about pitching up a tent wherever the sea views are best. Three Cliffs Bay (*above right*) is one beauty spot we can definitely recommend.

For more information visit: www.threecliffsbay.com/camping

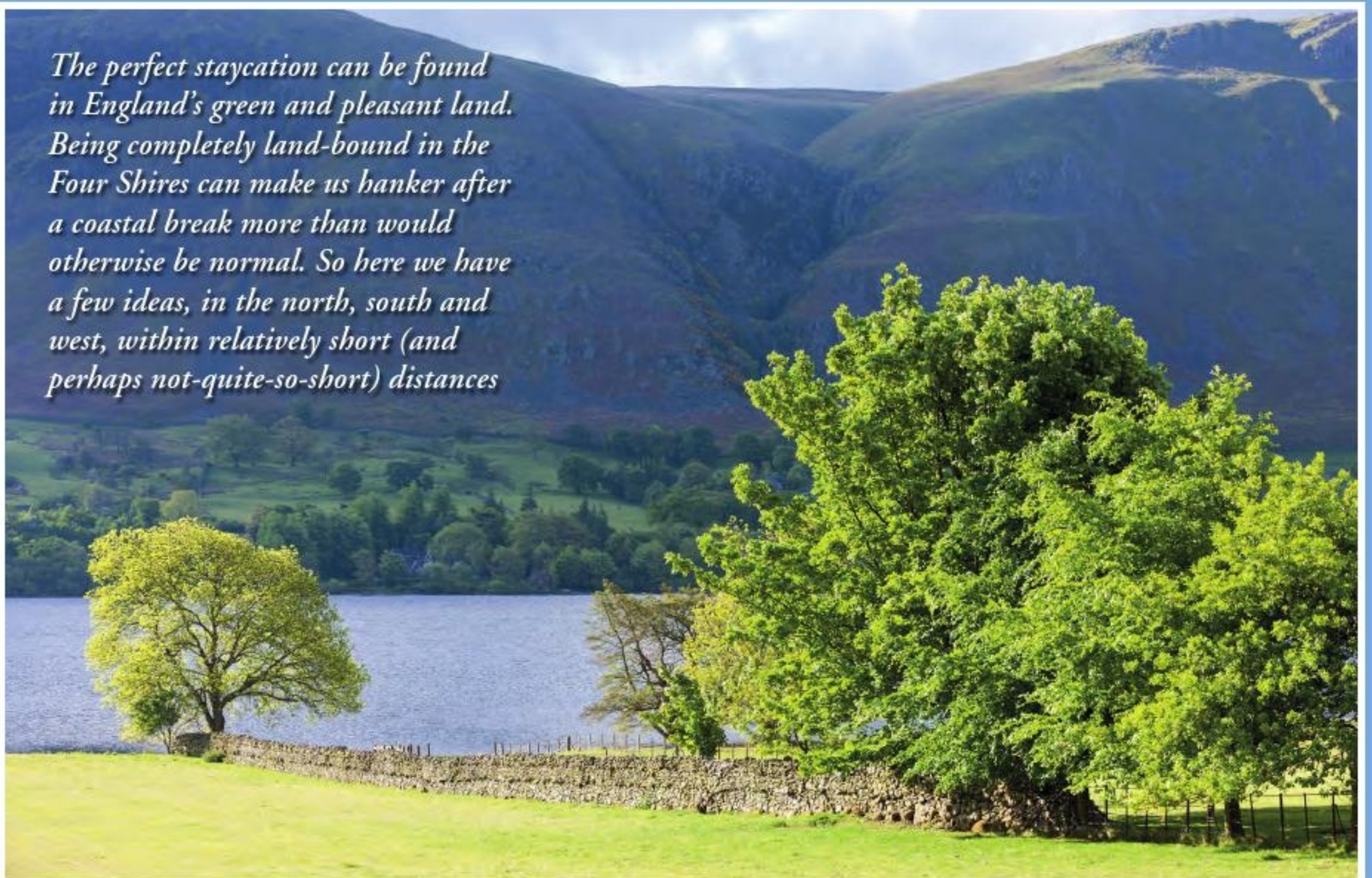
QUIRKY: SHEPHERD'S HUT

It's glamping, but not as you know it. Enjoy the stunning views without having to worry about the extremities by hiring a cosy, unique shepherd's hut (*inset pic*). Pet friendly and very charming!

See www.scamper-holidays.co.uk/three-cliffs-bay-holidays-shepherds-huts



The perfect staycation can be found in England's green and pleasant land. Being completely land-bound in the Four Shires can make us hanker after a coastal break more than would otherwise be normal. So here we have a few ideas, in the north, south and west, within relatively short (and perhaps not-quite-so-short) distances



Lake District

four hours

We can't forget that some of the most beautiful shores aren't found at the seaside. Looking to the north one will find the famous mountainous region of the Lake District (*below left*). Written into history, thanks to the Lake Poets such as William Wordsworth, the Lake District welcomes hikers and nature lovers. While away the hours at one of our suggested locations below...

TRADITIONAL: B&B

If you're wanting to see the Lake District in the traditional way, then a quaint bed and breakfast is the way to go. We like the look of the pretty Little Town Farm in Newlands, which was featured in Beatrix Potter's *The Tale of Mrs Tiggy-Winkle*.

For more information go to www.littletownfarm.co.uk

ALTERNATIVE: THE MODERN LOG CABIN

A cabin in the woods is by no means a new idea, but have you ever stayed in one with WiFi? The Lodge in the northern Lake District offers the best of both worlds to visitors - surrounded by nature on the outside, and yet fully equipped on the inside.

Search for The Lodge, Dukes Meadow at www.airbnb.com

Brighton

two and a half hours

Heading down towards the beaches of the south, we can't think of a better destination than Brighton (*Royal Pavillion domes below, bandstand pier on the right*). At just about a two and a half hour drive from the Shires, there are no excuses not to take a trip to 'London by the Sea'. Not only does it boast beautiful beaches and that famous pier, the town itself is a hub of vibrant activity. With cultural hotspots a-plenty, there'll be something to see and do for everyone in the family. Take a look at our accommodation suggestions below to complete your trip.

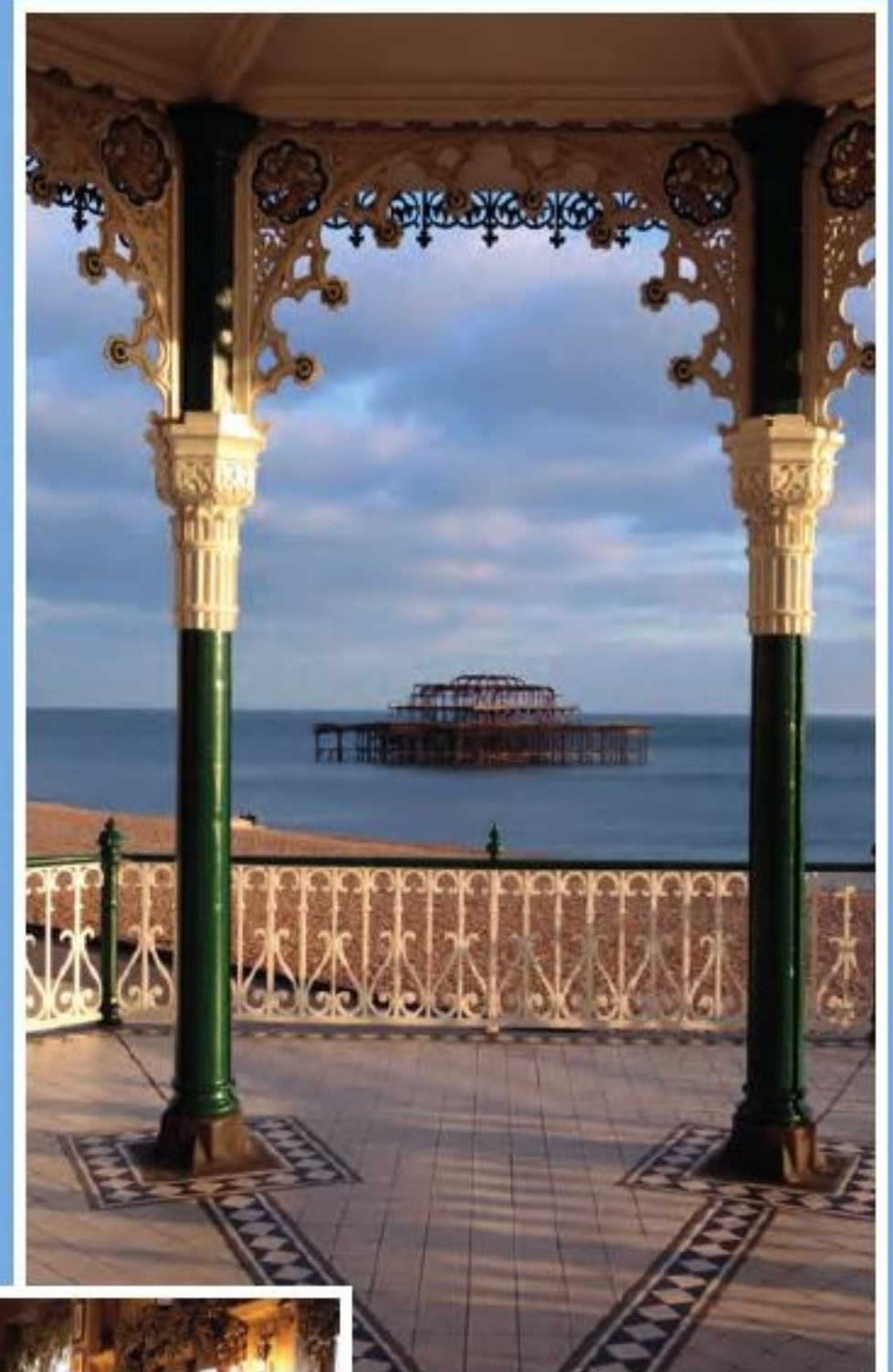
TRADITIONAL: HOTEL

Finding a good hotel can be like a treasure hunt. Nevertheless, we have found the wonderful Hotel Du Vin. It is somewhere you can be beside the sea while enjoying some of the finer things in life (*like the bar, inset right*). The perfect deluxe beach break.

See www.hotelduvin.com/locations/brighton/

CONTEMPORARY: NEW YORK-STYLE LOFT LIVING

Spacious, stylish, and oh so modern. Ideal for large groups who are looking for something a little 'out there'. Just search 'Vine Street Studios' (*pictured far right inset*), at www.airbnb.com



canal
DAY

On the first Sunday in October Banbury Town Council, once again, will host the ever popular Canal Day. It throws open the canal that runs through the heart of the town to visitors by land and boat.

The festival, celebrating the special relationship Banbury has with the Oxford Canal, is in its 11th year. This artery which once brought raw goods and trade to the town is still a vital part of the modern market town, bringing boaters and holiday barges right into the centre. A packed programme of activities and events makes this a great family day out. The range of stalls on offer, from voluntary organisations, independent traders and food concessions mean that the whole day can be spent wandering along the towpaths on either side of the canal.

HAND MADE

ORIGINAL

Cherwell arts & crafts market 2014

LOCAL

HIGH QUALITY

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Garden
Flowerpots
Workshop
Gallery
Shop

Special Offer for August 2014

FREE - Two hot drinks and a slice of delicious homemade cake to share in our new café The Straw Kitchen when you spend £59 or more on flowerpots. See website for details and T&Cs. Café closed Mon & Tues (ex. bank hols)

Whichford Pottery, Whichford, Nr. Shipston-on-Stour, Warwickshire, CV36 5PG www.whichfordpottery.com



The Cherwell District Council Arts Market will be running again, giving festivalgoers the opportunity to see a great range of work from professional artists and makers and to purchase direct from them. This annual Banbury event grows in popularity and scale each year, with this year's market promising to be the best yet. There will be a great mix of work on sale from pottery and ceramics to paintings, print work, glassware, jewellery and woodwork, textiles and metal

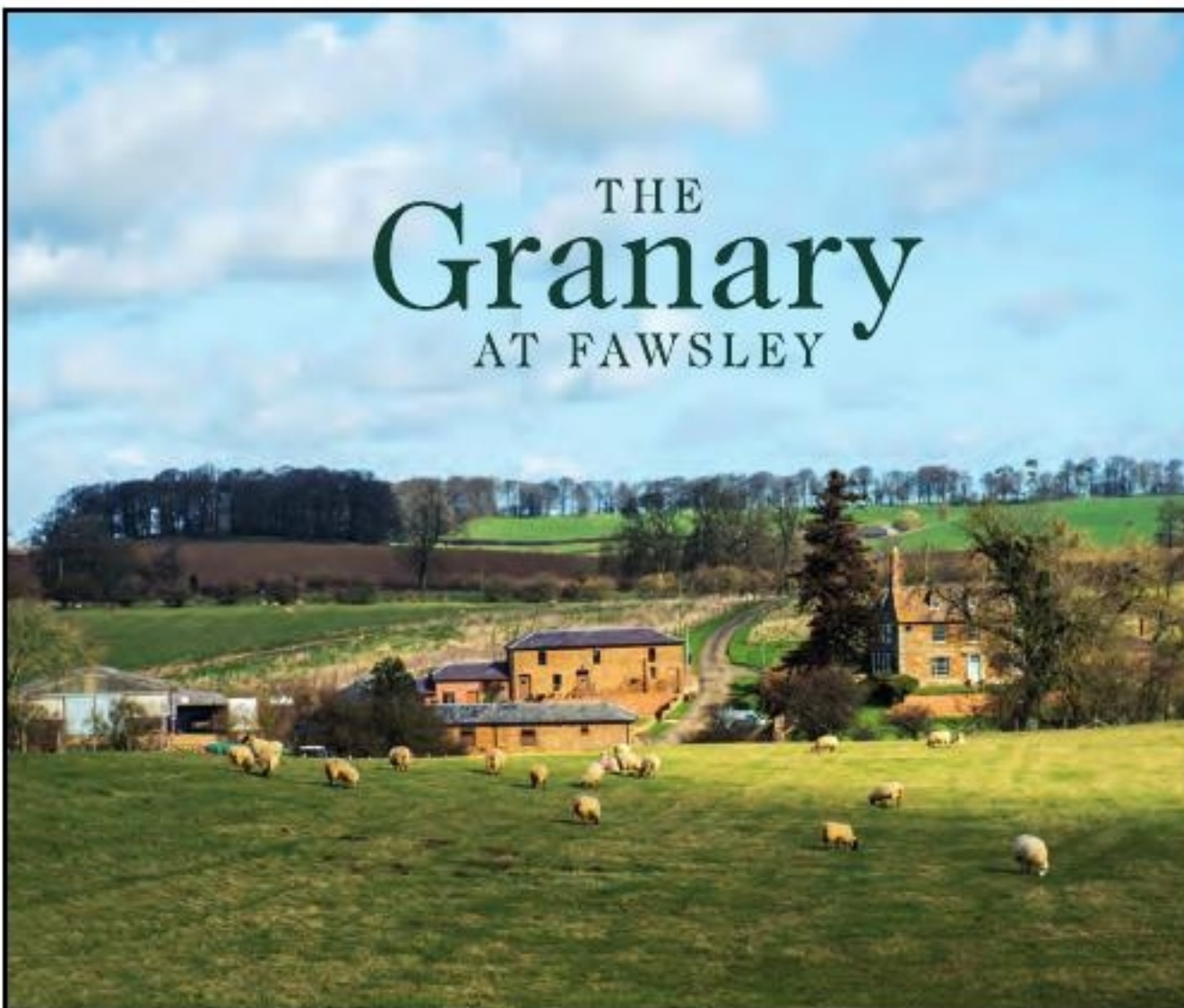
work. It's a great place to get a head start on your Christmas shopping, however some just buy for themselves to update their look or find the perfect object for that spot in the house crying out for adornment.

Artists interested in having a pitch should contact Nicola Riley on 01295 221724.

The Cherwell District Council Arts market will be in the Chamberlain Court Car Park on Sunday 5th October from 10.30am to 5pm.



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Email: info@granary-hotel.com

www.granary-hotel.com



booking your holiday

what lies beneath?



A holiday is probably one of the most important 'out and about' things you plan each year. Let's face it, it's what a lot of us work for. The problem is who to book with? There is no shortage of online travel agents, high street travel agents and tour operators to choose from, but what do they offer? They may have the holiday you are looking for, but what's in the small print?

Things to Remember:

Is the travel agent approved by Abta? And can they protect your flights through Atol? After you have booked, will you continue to receive the service you got prior to booking, or will you become a booking reference?

And finally, always take out the relevant travel insurance to cover your holiday. For example, insurance for a cruise is completely different to standard holiday cover.

At Independent Travel Club, we have all of the answers and will go above and beyond to create your lifetime memories. We are a small, niche, company and you will only ever deal with the one personal advisor who quotes for you, before and after booking.

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WOODSTOCK LIVE

Saturday 23rd - Sunday 24th August (Bank Holiday weekend)

Folk, jazz, classical, reggae, ska and rock will be heard over the two days of the Woodstock Live festival over the August Bank Holiday weekend.

Headlining on the Saturday is 'Leader', the Witney-based band formed from the ashes of 'Million Faces' and already gaining a great reputation on the circuit with their anthemic songs. Earlier in the day, Cooper Black will take to the stage with their interpretations of the 'obscure and familiar', in a Waterboys inspired soundscape.

Virtuoso acoustic guitarist Rory Evans makes his Woodstock debut on the Sunday, and the 'Blake's Heaven Big Band' perform their Frank Zappa inspired tunes. Headliners 'The Inflatables' will close the show with their driving ska songs.

Food stalls and festival menus from the bars and restaurants will tempt the hungry and the Festival Bar on the square will offer real ales and Pimms, to raise funds for the festival, which is of course free.

Woodstock Live is a true 'community music festival' that offers the welcoming ambience of the beautiful town square of historic Woodstock, with its 12th century architecture and ivy clad walls forming a natural amphitheatre in which to enjoy two days of an eclectic mix of music...and all for free!

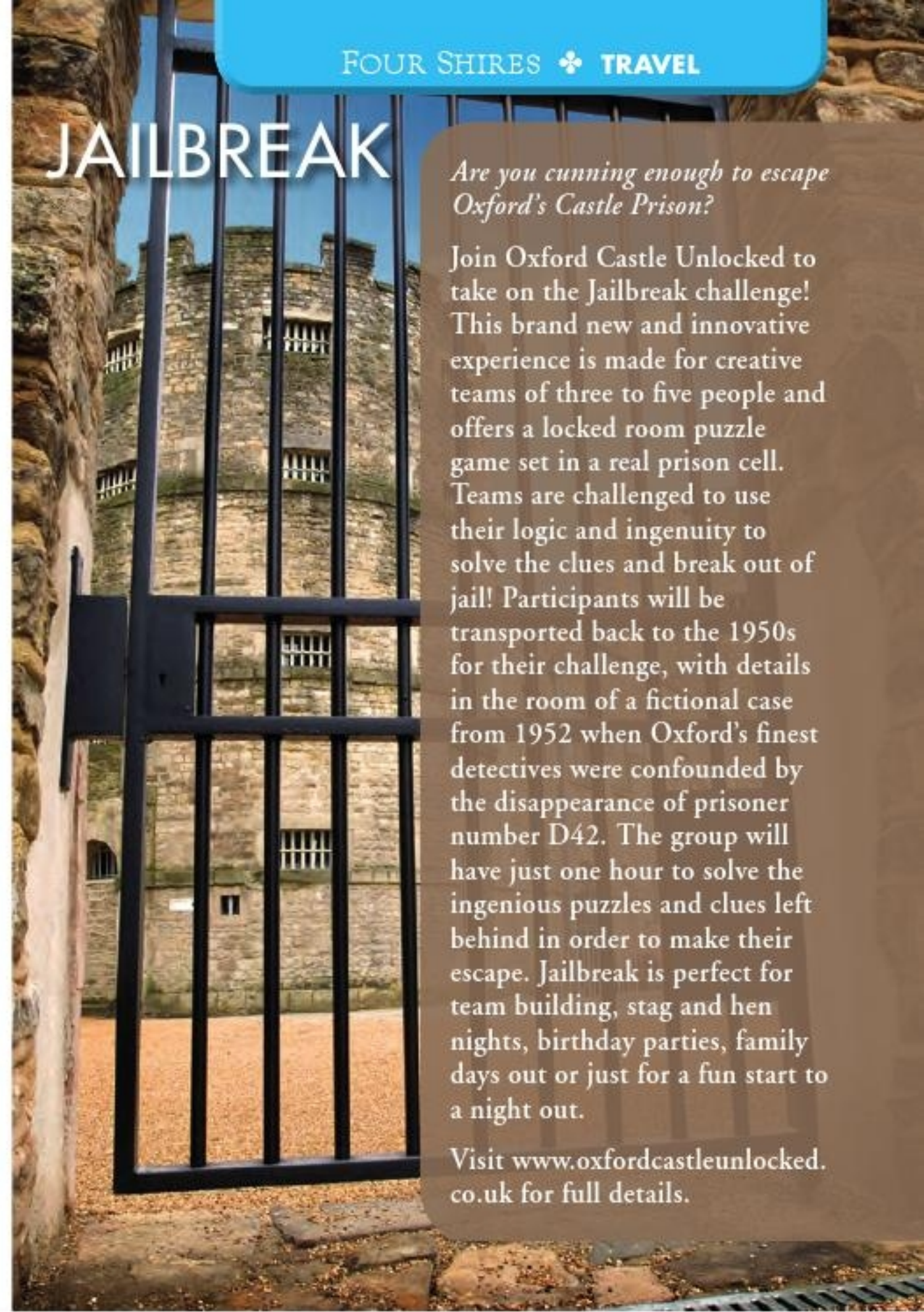


JAILBREAK

Are you cunning enough to escape Oxford's Castle Prison?

Join Oxford Castle Unlocked to take on the Jailbreak challenge! This brand new and innovative experience is made for creative teams of three to five people and offers a locked room puzzle game set in a real prison cell. Teams are challenged to use their logic and ingenuity to solve the clues and break out of jail! Participants will be transported back to the 1950s for their challenge, with details in the room of a fictional case from 1952 when Oxford's finest detectives were confounded by the disappearance of prisoner number D42. The group will have just one hour to solve the ingenious puzzles and clues left behind in order to make their escape. Jailbreak is perfect for team building, stag and hen nights, birthday parties, family days out or just for a fun start to a night out.

Visit www.oxfordcastleunlocked.co.uk for full details.



OXFORD LIEDER FESTIVAL

Schubert's complete songs heard for the first time in one festival at the beautiful 17th century Sheldonian Theatre in Oxford

10th October - 1st November

Sholto Kynoch, from Oxfordshire, founded the Oxford Lieder Festival 13 years ago, simply to play Schubert with friends. It is now the most prestigious Lieder festival in the UK and this year all Schubert's songs are to be performed in one Festival, the first time ever.

The celebration starts with an unforgettable concert given by eight tenors and baritones performing a range of Schubert songs. They will be joined by Sarah Connolly to create a festival chorus for the exquisite serenade *Zögernd leise*.

The Festival programme will be performed by some of the greatest lieder performers ever convened in one place including Sir Thomas Allen, Ian Bostridge, Sarah Connolly, Sophie Daneman, and James Gilchrist, amongst many others.



the
Schubert
project



The closing concert will be a fitting finale to The Schubert Project, including late masterpieces such as *The Shepherd on the Rock* and Schubert's last song of all, the uplifting *Die Taubenpost*.

In all there will be 55 concerts and numerous other events. Visit www.oxfordliederfestival.co.uk

BRINGING OXFORD'S HIDDEN HISTORY TO LIFE

GREAT ESCAPES!
WED 23 JULY - SUN 31 AUGUST

Uncover the funny, the frank and the downright stupid escape attempt stories at Oxford Castle Unlocked this summer. From climbing down a rope made of bed sheets to skating away through a snowy Oxford in white camouflage, there are plenty of escape stories throughout the millennium of Oxford Castle's history.

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ANOTHER WEEKEND 'en France'...

The *Four Shires* is back in France and again the trip from front door to a glass of rose in a French market square takes less than four hours!

I am in the Auvergne, one of France's great secrets.

A train from Banbury gets me to Southampton Airport in just under 90 minutes where it's just 99 steps from the train to check in. Another 90 minutes with Flybe down to the airport at Clermont Ferrand, where a ten minute bus or taxi ride takes you right into the heart of the city.

Clermont is a great place to base yourself from where you can explore the region or just relax and unwind. It is exciting times in the region as it is waiting for a decision in the next month or two which may confirm it as a World Heritage Site.

The famous dormant volcano Puy-de-Dome is just six miles away and within half an hour of arriving I was at the top of it! Editor Jeremy would have donned his pitons, tied a rope around his waist and shinned up the side - I went up on the train.

The views from the top are sensational, overlooking many of the extinct volcano craters that the area is famous for. The summit is dominated by massive telecommunications antennae that sit alongside a Roman Temple which is undergoing restoration.

Back down in the city I based myself in the brand new Hotel Mecure in the corner of the Place de Jaude, Clermont's largest square from where everything is easily accessible.

Clermont is the home of the Michelin Tyre Company and whilst they have scaled down their presence there they are still the city's largest employer; being a bit of a petrol head the test track was on my 'list of things to do'.

I spent a pleasant evening sat in the square with a glass or two talking to the many people who were arriving to watch Clermont being thrashed by Saracens in the rugby on big screens that were being erected for the match.

Clermont is a dark city architecturally. Whilst it has many stunning buildings they are nearly all built out of black volcanic rock, looking like many of the soot covered buildings we used to have in the north.

My guide gave me a lesson on the etiquette of kissing - one on each cheek as a greeting or a goodbye with someone you don't



Peter Jones brings a piece of the Auvergne (and a glass of wine or two) back to the four shires





Comedie Francais and features many made by France's top designers. The way in which they are displayed is truly stunning.

Rudolf Nuryev died in France and there is an exhibition of not just the costumes he danced in but many of his personal effects.

I spent the afternoon and evening in the Spa town of Vichy where by coincidence they were celebrating the Fete Napoleon. This was a celebration of Napoleon III who, when he was exiled, lived in Leamington Spa!

know very well, three for a cousin or relative or four for someone you know really well. All I got however was the theory lesson, not the practical!

Now, whilst I would have been happy just to stay and explore the lanes and shops, including the many wine cellars that run under the city there was a lot more to see and with the aid of a hire car the next morning, I headed a very short distance north to the town of Riom.

It is an historic town with 16 listed monuments and a further 57 registered monuments. There are many old houses with internal courtyards and a famous clock tower with 128 steps to the top.

My colleagues chose to climb the tower. I explored the Saturday morning food market and enjoyed a glass of rose in the sunshine.

After lunch I gate-crashed a wedding in a nearby village. It was all very traditional and quite moving until the bride entered the church to Joe Cocker singing: "with a little help from my friends".

The local wine is Saint-Pourcain, one of the oldest vineyards in France and it would have been so wrong not to have visited. The wine maker - straight from central casting - gave a very long and passionate



explanation of his craft, although eventually he did open several bottles.

Now if someone had told me at the beginning of the year that one of my favourite moments would be a visit to a museum of ballet costumes I would have laughed. But the next morning I visited the National Centre for Stage Costumes which is based in a former Cavalry barracks in the town of Moulins.

It is the home of over 10,000 set costumes from the Opera National de Paris and the

Next morning I was in the nearby town of Thiers. More than two thirds of the knives used in France are made here and I was not only able to visit a factory to watch them being made but was able to make my own which I was allowed to keep!

Now I have made no reference to the four lunches, three dinners or three breakfasts I enjoyed, all very French and all very different although I can confirm I am not a fan of Andouillette (a tripe sausage). There are restaurants everywhere - I even spotted a McDonald's, but this is a great area to get lost in and just follow your nose...

All under four hours from Banbury. ✦

Peter Jones was a guest of the Auvergne Regional Tourist Board.



TRAVELLING WITH YOUR ANIMALS

easyPet

Holidays offer a great opportunity to spend quality time with loved ones, pets included. Thanks to changes to the Pet Travel Scheme (PETS)

regulations it is even easier and cheaper to take your pets abroad. Before rushing out to buy your dog a Sombrero or Factor 50 for your cat there are many things to consider first. And be warned, unless all of the PETS criteria are fulfilled your pet may be taken into quarantine or returned to the country from which you just came!

A blood test is no longer necessary after vaccination against rabies, the six month wait before returning to the UK after rabies vaccination is now 21 days, and treating your pet against ticks will no longer be obligatory. An approved microchip must still be implanted prior to your pet receiving their rabies vaccination and they must be issued with a Pet Passport before they travel. You must wait three weeks after starting rabies vaccination before travelling and tapeworm treatment must be given to dogs by a vet between 1-5 days before travelling back to the UK. These changes apply to pets travelling to EU or listed non-EU countries. For regulations concerning travel from unlisted non-EU countries see the DEFRA website.

As well as rabies, make sure pets are up to date with their annual vaccination for other infectious diseases. Before travelling they should be in good health and fit to travel. If your pet suffers from stress or travel sickness ask your vet about medications that may help.

For the most up to date information on the PETS scheme go to www.defra.gov.uk/pets or call the PETS helpline 0370 241 1710. So with all that in mind, seek advice from your vet before you travel, plan your trip well, and above all have a happy holiday!



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CAT CARE WHILE YOU'RE AWAY

Cats are usually independent and far less reliant on your company than dogs. Adult cats are also lazy and needy - they sleep for two thirds or more of their day and require attention when they are awake and active. However, they usually don't mind being alone while you are out of the house during the day (that's lucky!) especially if they have a way to get outside.



But if you are going away on holiday, you need to ensure that your cat is properly cared for. Given that your feline friend is a home-loving and territorial creature, it can get stressed in new environments, so if possible it is better to care for your cat at home when you go away. A trusted cat-friendly neighbour, friend or family member can be asked to feed your cat, clean the litter tray, provide food, fresh water and some much wanted stroking.

If you're planning to use a cattery, try to get your cat used to them from a young age. Licensed boarding catteries must adhere to various regulations regarding hygiene and safety, and a copy of the licence should be displayed prominently. Remember to check yours out before leaving your precious furry friend to board your flight!



eye eye



We are all well aware of the effects of too much ultra-violet (UV) radiation on the skin, where it can cause sunburn, speed up the natural ageing process and lead to an increased risk of skin cancer. Our eyes are ten times more sensitive to UV light than our skin, and the long term effects of UV radiation on the eye can include increased risk of cataracts and macula degeneration.

On bright, sunny days, UV radiation levels are at their highest. You should protect your eyes with a good pair of sunglasses. When choosing non-prescription sunglasses, always look for the CE mark - your guarantee that the lenses will provide you with 100% protection against UV radiation up to wavelengths of 400nm. By law, this marking should appear on all sunglasses sold in the UK, and prescription sunglasses will also meet this standard.

It's especially important to remember to protect children's eyes as well. With larger pupils compared with adults, and a clearer lens that transmits more light through the eye, up to 70% more UV light can reach the retina. Latest figures from the World Health Organisation estimate that with less natural eye protection, and more time spent playing outside, by the time a child reaches the age of 18 they may already have absorbed up to 80% of their total lifetime's UV.

For the 2014 summer season, sunglasses are continuing in the bolder, larger styles as seen in the previous couple of years, but updated with the addition of coloured lenses - a move away from the traditional browns and greys. The range of colours that are available is limited only by the imagination of the wearer, and this means sunglasses can perfectly complement the eclectic, bright palette of today's high street fashion. ✦

advice provided by Walford & Round



Superdry Chassi gun metal aviator men's sunglasses, £50.00

main pictures: ladies sunglasses by Dakota, and children's sunglasses, both available at Walford & Round

insets: ASOS handmade acetate retro sunglasses with metal bridge, £35.00; Bluezoo Flower Shop dotted sunglasses for children, £4.00 at Debenhams; cats eye sunglasses, £9.95, at www.whatsabouttown.com

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Offer subject to availability. *Price applies when purchasing a complete pair of glasses to the value of £150 or more.

Summer holidays are here at last and, despite having a pretty sultry few weeks, one always gets the urge to get on a plane and jet off to warmer climes. Packing light can be a challenge, especially if you're hoping to pop your little case onto the plane as hand luggage. To be within the allowances, you'll need a specially sized cabin bag... and a very carefully planned wardrobe.

Start with your evenings and a pretty dress in a fine fabric. Then add your evening shoes and a small bag. Flip flops are perfect for the daytime, teamed with a bikini or one-piece and a sundress. Shorts and vests will keep you comfy for days out, and for a casual evening, team your shorts with a sparkly top. Keep your holiday wardrobe simple, with mix and match colours, and you'll soon hone it down to the bare essentials, whilst still knowing that you'll look your best.

Opt for miniatures when you're planning your toiletries, buy your sunscreen when you get there, and if there's anything you can take in sachets, even better, as the packing can then be thrown away, leaving you room in your bag to bring back some memories in the form of a few souvenirs.



this page:

vintage print dress from Miss Selfridge, £65.00; espadrilles by Dune, £110.00; Let It Reign Bon Voyage pouch bag, £20.00 at www.notonthehighstreet.com; lace trimmed black shorts, £25.00 & beaded top, both Miss Selfridge;

opposite:

sequin print bodysculpt swimsuit, £14.00, George at Asda; tribal mirror cami, £14 at Primark; FitFlop Keiko Skinny Mazarine in blue, £75.00; floral embellished maxi dress, £65.00 at www.vestryonline.com; Accessorize Seabreeze Tassle beach bag, £22.00; ripped denim shorts at www.very.co.uk, £25.00; navy beaded kaftan dress, £29.00, Apricot at www.apricotonline.co.uk; cabin bags in magenta, azure, yellow, coral & lime, £69.00 at Debenhams





END OF YEAR SHOW *celebrates student success*

Graduating creative arts students from Banbury and Bicester College put on a dazzling display of fashion, art, media and graphics in their end of year showcase.

The exhibition, entitled 'Now We're Here', opened with a private view for invited guests last month. Family, friends and VIPs enjoyed a range of artworks and installations - including those in the newly-opened media centre - before an outdoor fashion show of items designed, pattern cut and made by students.

The exhibition at the college in Broughton Road followed a month-long showcase in the town centre, during which staff and students held pop-up events, exhibitions and workshops. Items produced at the community workshops went on display at the end of year show.

The evening also saw the official launch of The Graduate Salon at Banbury and Bicester College. Customers and local salon owners were invited to a drink and canapé reception and to find out more about the salon which is run in partnership with award-winning high street hairdressing chain, Francesco Group.



BODY *beautiful*

If you're anything like us, then there's a good chance that your holiday is looming and even the notion of becoming 'beach ready' sounds impossible. Luckily the impossible has become achievable with these beauty fixes, all possible with less than a week to go and with glorious long-term results.

The immovable manicure

A nice manicure is the cherry on top of a polished holiday look, however nobody wants to be fussing over chipped nails and reapplying when they're meant to be relaxing. Go for a gel manicure and maybe even pedicure - such as Shellac or Gelish. Guaranteed to last around three weeks, or as long as you can wait before you go back to the salon, nothing will chip or budge these glossy colours.

Buff your body

Exfoliation doesn't just leave skin silky smooth but it also primes the body for an even, better lasting tan. The best part is that a scrub doesn't need to be expensive to be effective, either. The night before you jet

treatments use keratin, a strengthening solution that, when heated, smooths and straightens the hair and is widely offered in salons (avoid any out-dated solutions containing formaldehyde, which can damage the hair cuticle). While it's not cheap, with professional treatments costing around £300, it's a luxury that means you can wave goodbye to the straighteners.

Face the Facial

At home or in a salon, treat yourself at least three to four days before departure. Facials are great for cleansing the skin, however many people are prone to breaking out the next day due to the deep-cleansing work that the face mask does. So research thoroughly the right face mask for your skin type. This could be making sure that the face mask is a clay based mask as clay is great for removing excess oils, deep cleaning your pores and preventing and clearing blackheads. Natural clay is a great detoxifying treatment process that doesn't leave your skin dry.



away, scrub yourself down (upward, sweeping motions are best to increase circulation and also aid detoxifying, therefore improve your skin's texture) and follow up by moisturising all over for an almost instant pick-me-up for your skin. Exfoliating once or twice a week is usually enough to achieve that perfect holiday ready silky skin.



Make do without make-up

If you're travelling somewhere hot and humid, you're going to want to reduce the amount of product you're using on your face. Getting eyelash extensions and a good eyebrow tint

may be the answer for this - dark lashes and filled-in brows frame the face, and chances are you'll be skipping foundation to soak up the sun anyway. Eyelash extensions can last around three weeks with proper care, so you're almost guaranteed to be covered for the length of your break.

Fail-safe frizz solution

A day soaking up the rays may be fun for you, but torture for you hair. If your hair is a nightmare in the heat and the last thing you want to do is waste time blow-drying and styling, then getting a Brazilian Blow Dry may be your solution. Most modern Brazilian



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THE SECRET LIFE
OF...
with maggie chaplin

the BUMBLE BEE

A thick fur coat is ideal for keeping the chills of early spring at bay, and when a queen bumblebee emerges from hibernation, that's just the protection she needs. There are several different species of bumblebee, all recognizable by their round hairy bodies and loud buzzing flight. They tend to be on the wing early in the year and the white – tailed variety will often be out feeding on pussy-willow as soon as February, when it's often too cold for the likes of the smaller, less hirsute cousin the honeybee to be active. The larger size of a bumblebee (up to 25mm) also reduces its vulnerability to low temperatures.

Like honeybees, bumblebees are social creatures and they live in colonies. They too have a ruling queen, numerous workers and just small numbers of males. There the similarity ends. Whereas a honeybee hive may survive for several years and consists of thousands of individuals, bumblebee nests will be home for just one season to no more than 400 bees. Only the queen bumblebee overwinters.

She hibernates in a small burrow in the soil, existing on the previous year's fat reserves. Before she attempts to set up a colony she needs to build up her strength, so when early in the year, we are "buzzed" by a large furry insect, it's likely to be a queen bumblebee on the hunt for early supplies of nectar.

Once fortified, she'll seek out a nest site, which might be a hole in the ground, an unoccupied bird box or just amongst tussocky grass. To begin with she has no help, and collects pollen herself to combine with wax that she secretes to form a mound to lay her eggs in. In front of that she builds a wax "pot" in which she stores nectar to sustain her while she sits on the mound incubating the eggs.

After a few days little white grubs emerge. It's still a one-parent family, and the queen spends an exhausting two weeks flying back and forth to collect more nectar to feed her ever-hungry brood. At last she gets a bit of time off whilst these larvae spin a cocoon in which to develop into adult bees. Help is near and from now on she will rarely leave the nest. The eggs she lays during the early summer will all develop into female domestic servants; some to forage to feed the expanding family, others to act as house and nursery maids.

The individuals from early broods are quite small, but later in the season, batches of new queens and males are produced. They do no work for the hive. Their job is to reproduce, so they leave the nest and feed and devote themselves to the task. It is, as usual, a competitive business and most males never mate.

As summer turns to autumn, the now redundant males and the old queen and her retinue die and the new, fertile queens hibernate ready to begin the cycle again the following spring, when once again we'll have the pleasure of seeing (and hearing) these mini flying teddy-bears on the wing. ❀

These glorious wild orchids were photographed only four miles from the centre of Banbury, not far from a public footpath to the west of Banbury.

The orchids enjoy a slightly damp environment, which is strange, for this summer seems to be shaping up to be quite hot and dry.

The orchids in this particular meadow have been thriving, spreading out from their original site and moving into neighbouring fields.

We think they are a glorious find!

orchids



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QUIET TIME

August is a comparatively quiet month in the garden, dead-heading and tidying up apart, now would be a good time to try something completely different. Feel the need to clip, then why not embrace the ancient art of topiary?

It is not just a modern fad - it has a long history. Ornamental plants - clipped into shapes - were known as topia in the days of ancient Rome, and the slaves who maintained them were known as the topiaries. Formal gardens were incredibly grand and needed a small army to keep them in order. Over the centuries topiary has slipped in and out of fashion, but today we are seeing not only a revival of formerly clipped hedges but splurges of creativity with a dash or two of fun thrown in. Take up your secateurs or shears and start clipping!

Evergreens are best as generally they have a robust constitution and don't mind being chopped. In the U.K. yew (*Taxus baccata*) and box (*Buxus*) are the most commonly used varieties for topiaries, especially for beginners. Clipping is usually carried out between May and September and can be done with everything from a petrol hedge-cutter to a pair of scissors. Look at the scale of what you want to trim and choose your weapon accordingly.

The rules of cutting are simple. Don't cut when there is frost forecast; ensure your tools are sharp and clean; cut a little at a time - you can always cut again, but it is difficult to stick pieces back on! Topiaries are three dimensional so you should frequently stand back and view your handiwork. Existing topiaries can be bought at massive expense for you to tidy up occasionally. Alternatively you can buy or make a metal shape to act as a template for your shape. It will soon be completely hidden by neatly trimmed foliage.

Best of all, work freehand and let your imagination run riot.



HELP WILDLIFE IN THESE DOG DAYS

If you didn't already know it, we are into the dog days of summer now. Traditionally, they last from 3rd July to 11th August and are reputedly the hottest weeks of the year.

This time of year takes its name from the brightest star in the night sky, Sirius, which from July until mid August rises and sets with the sun.

The Romans believed this was what made midsummer so warm, with the star adding its warmth to that of the sun.

Sirius is part of the Canis Major constellation, so that's why the weeks of heat are called dog days. If these dog days happen to be particularly dry, as at present, then garden wildlife can suffer. Birds and mammals that rely on earthworms for food can go hungry as worms retreat deep underground as the surface soil dries. Hedgehogs being a typical example. A small amount of tinned dog food on a flat tray put out at night would be greatly appreciated.

It's a total myth that hedgehogs enjoy bread and milk!



Don't forget fresh water every day at ground level in a shallow bowl or saucer. You'll see a variety of birds visiting to drink and bathe, but look out for the neighbour's cat!



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NEW

MODERN CHILDREN - COUCH POTATOES?

Those old researchers have been at it again and can now reveal that many children never venture out to play, much less know what is going on in their own gardens. It is no great surprise then, but what a shame with so much to see and learn.

Apparently kids are watching more TV and sitting in front of computer games rather than playing outside. Some spend countless hours a week on hand held computers and nearly a third of children never venture into their gardens at all according to PlantforLife campaign. This campaign is aimed at raising awareness of plants and the role they play in enhancing people's quality of life. It urges parents and youngsters to get outside and enjoy gardening as an enriching experience that involves physical exertion, especially at a time of concerns about infant obesity.

It suggests that children should be encouraged to sow sunflower seeds for example. "This really shows how easy it is to grow things. Gardening should be challenging for children,

but not impossible. Some ideas in gardening are suggested to help youngster's creativity. Build a place to hide out, from a treehouse to a simple wigwam. Children will create their own games in such an environment using their imagination, and it is well accepted



that creative play forms the foundation of emotional and intellectual growth. Children can have wonderful "garden memories" to store if encouraged. Try some of the following:

- Help to pick strawberries or other fruit.
- Pick flowers and press them.
- Build a treehouse
- Make a den in the bushes.
- Create a garden plot and watch it grow.
- Look for creepy crawlies under rocks.
- Hang up a bird feeder and count the number and variety of birds it attracts.
- Plant a sunflower and watch it grow.
- Look for frogspawn in the pond.
- Collect caterpillars and watch them transform into butterflies.
- Kick or roll through fallen autumn leaves.

All of these will create wonderful childhood memories that we bring out later in life and enjoy yet again.

PlantforLife has developed a gardening guide with easily achievable projects designed to stimulate growing minds. *Nature's Nurture* is available to download from www.plantsforlife.info/naturesnurture where parents can find plenty of things to keep the children busy through the long summer holidays and have fun yourself.

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COUNTRYMAN

GIVING THE GIRL A RUB DOWN

George Fenemore counts down to the unleashing of the green goddess...



The clock is ticking - the autumn sown oil seed rape received its last visit from the crop sprayer during the second week of Wimbledon. It was a dose of desiccant to get the crop to ripen off evenly. The mix also included a treatment to help seal the pods and reduce pod shatter during the harvest.

The 'green goddess' should, weather permitting, be strutting her stuff by the end of the month. The spring planted oil seed rape will in time receive the same treatment. We have grown oil seed rape for many years. It is a crop that has become very important, ranking alongside wheat as a staple food crop. It is the only sustainable vegetable oil producing crop that can be grown with any reliability in the northern hemisphere. The oil seed rape crop has many uses. It is not just the oil that is important. The flowers produce a very important source of early pollen and nectar for bees.

Beside the production of vegetable oils and honey, rape seed oil is part of many every day food products that we take for granted. It is used to produce soaps, cosmetics, plastics, lubricants and bio fuels. I mention this because after the recent ban on a number of seed dressings and insecticide treatments, the viability of producing oil seed rape is in question.

Although DEFRA and the British Bee Keepers Association opposed the ban, our European masters in their rush to appease the 'green Taliban' banned the use of neonicotinoid products for two years from December 2013.

As we grow both autumn and spring planted oil seed rape, we have a 'before and after the ban situation'. Our autumn planted crops that went into the ground with the banned seed dressing, are in very good form and have had very little extra insecticide used on them.

The spring planted rape crops were planted in very good conditions but have been under constant insect attack from the word go. The emerging crop was hit hard by the flea beetle. After three passes with the sprayer using old style insecticides, we ended up with a weakened, stunted crop. We were then hit by pollen beetle at the green bud stage. This delightful beastie chews its way into the bud before it opens and destroys the flower before it seeds. So it was back out with the sprayer for three more passes! Therefore our spring planted rape crop had six times the active ingredient sprayed on it than the autumn planted crop.

With the spring crop out of the rotation we may, in the end, have to stop producing vegetable oil crops altogether. This will hit the bees very hard, as they will lose a very important early spring pollen and nectar source.

All will not be lost however, as vegetable oil crops are grown in many other parts of the world. These countries allow GM technology and the use of neonicotinoid products... so perhaps it's time for some real 'joined up thinking' on just how we are going to feed ourselves.

Experts have recently predicted that by 2030 we will need to import the equivalent of an extra 17 million hectares (41,990,000 acres) just to feed the population of this country.

But hey ho it's all too complicated for this old countryman, so I am off to give the old girl a good rub down (the green goddess that is) before the off.

The harvest is only a matter of a few weeks away and once the crops are off it will be full steam ahead to get the next lot in the ground! ♦

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Always had room in your heart for an AGA, but never enough space in the kitchen? Well now you have. The electric AGA City60 is everything you would expect from an AGA, but wrapped up in a smaller package. At just 60cm wide - the same size as a slot-in cooker, or a standard kitchen unit - it's perfect for smaller spaces.

There are two ovens, offering roasting, baking and simmering functions and a hotplate which allows you to boil and simmer. Both the ovens and hotplates can be switched on when you need them and off when you don't. Plus, with programmability, you can time the roasting/baking oven to be ready when you are.

If you place your AGA City60 order and pay a deposit before the 30th September you will receive a 'Getting you started' cookware pack worth over £500.

To learn more about the AGA City60 or other AGA models, call 01295 816795 or visit AGA Adderbury at Twyford Mill, Adderbury OX17 3SX. Alternatively visit the website at agaliving.com



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Tropical and tribal prints have been popular this season and the very brave might introduce a flamboyant piece of furniture. A more restrained look would include versatile soft furnishings and accessories, which can be easily changed to suit the season.

For exceptional contemporary living spaces and a range of furniture, lighting, rugs and accessories from innovative designers such as Vola, Quooker, Karpeta and Carl Hansen visit www.michaelwrightfurniture.co.uk



market comment

Matthew Allen of Fisher German Estate Agents reviews recent market activity for people thinking of selling this year



“Demand still strong but continued lack of supply”

- Large increase in London buyers registering
- Average house price increased by 8.8% from last year
- London market cooling
- Local market remains positive for realistically priced properties

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Hethe, Oxfordshire



Highly sought after traditional ring-fenced farm with potential

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- EPC rating F

Guide price £2,500,000

Mickleton, Gloucestershire



Rarely available smallholding, unique development opportunity

- Existing 3 bedroom house
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Guide price £795,000

15 offices selling across the UK

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Matthew Allen



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Jackie Sweetland



Alison Wenham



Great Bourton, Oxfordshire



Attractive period cottage on the edge of the village

- 2 reception rooms, kitchen, snug
- 3 bedrooms, bathroom
- Double garage, off-street parking
- Attractive gardens to front
- EPC rating F

Guide price £475,000

Adderbury, Oxfordshire



Charming period cottage in popular village

- 2 reception rooms, kitchen/breakfast
- 3 bedrooms plus study/bedroom
- Enclosed private garden
- Off street parking
- EPC rating E

Guide price £599,950

15 offices selling across the UK

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Hook Norton, Oxfordshire



Stone village house in highly desirable village

- Kitchen/breakfast room
- 5 bedrooms
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- Chain-free, 2,847 sq ft
- EPC rating E

Guide price £695,000

Greatworth, Northamptonshire/Oxfordshire borders



Well presented family house on the edge of the village

- 2 reception rooms, kitchen/breakfast room and family room
- 4 bedrooms (1 en-suite), bathroom
- Garage/workshop, enclosed gardens
- EPC rating D

Guide price £475,000

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perfect slumber



The And So To Bed showroom in Oxford will be offering amazing discounts during their summer sale which starts soon with up to 60% off popular collections. There will be fantastic savings on a selection of luxury beds and handcrafted furniture, perfect for those looking to achieve the complete bedroom concept.

Offering the very best in high quality bedroom furniture design the showroom has an extensive offering of bedframes including traditional iron, brass and solid wood to contemporary upholstered and unusual metal and leather designs.

From the charming Palais, with its French style sleigh design to the elegant curved lines of the Victorian inspired Juniper metal bed, And So To Bed have a bed to suit every taste. Hand finished by artisans who are devoted to their craft, the breath-taking beds are available in a variety of finishes, including polished wood, veneers and bespoke paint finishes.

Customers will experience the very best one-to-one service; And So To Bed's professional ambassadors can offer expert

advice on choosing the right bed, mattress or bedroom furniture option.

To complement the original design of each bed, there is also a unique selection of accessories, lighting, art, framed pictures and luxurious bed linen to choose from.

Call the Oxford store on 01865 204 202 or visit the store at 44 St Clements Street, Oxford OX4 1AG



BRASH

is beautiful

Treat your home to some clashing florals this summer to give it a zingy lift! Kelly Swallow patchwork egg chair, £1950 at www.kellyswallow.co.uk; In-Spaces Mallory cushion, £84, www.in-spaces.com; Carolyn Donnelly eclectic boxed candle, £10 from Dunnes Stores at www.dunnesstores.com; floral teapot from Dunnes Stores, £13; set of 8 painted metal pears in assorted designs, £29.95 at www.dotcomgiftshop.com



speakeasy



Slide back in time to when phones were simply that - a way to communicate, quickly and efficiently, a vehicle to plan a date to get together with a friend, rather than laboriously typing endless messages and waiting for a response. Straightforward and easy to use, these retro style telephones are available from cuckooland.com in a range of designs and colours. The phones pictured start at just £29.95





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| Hall | Cloakroom | Sitting room/dining room | Re-fitted kitchen | Utility | Large master bedroom with re-fitted en-suite shower | Two further double bedrooms | Re-fitted family bathroom | Garage | Parking | Gardens | Energy rating D |



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| Sitting room | dining room | kitchen | cloakroom | two double bedrooms | bathroom | small garden to rear | on street parking.

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| porch | hallway | lounge | kitchen/dining room | two double bedrooms | wet room | garage | off street parking | good sized gardens to front and rear.
Energy Rating D

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Hallway | lounge | kitchen with integrated white goods | conservatory | two double bedrooms with built in wardrobes | shower room | enclosed rear garden | garage and off street parking.
Energy Rating E

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Hallway | cloak room | family room | lounge | dining room | kitchen/breakfast room | utility room | very large master bedroom with ensuite shower room | three double bedrooms | one single bedroom | family bathroom | pretty enclosed rear garden | garage | off street parking | gardens to front | Energy Rating D

Unfurnished - Available Mid/End July 2014



NORTH NEWINGTON

• £595 PCM

A CHARMING PERIOD ONE BEDROOMED COTTAGE SITUATED IN THIS PRETTY VILLAGE TO THE WEST OF BANBURY

| Entrance lobby | sitting room with bay/study area | fitted kitchen with small utility | galleried master bedroom and shower room | well presented front garden | off road parking | well maintained landscaped flagged patio garden to rear.
Energy Rating F

Unfurnished - Available End of July 2014

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50 years of *radio* HORTON

Radio Horton, the hospital radio service celebrated its 50th anniversary last month.

June Snowden of the Hospital Broadcast association took the opportunity to recognise the hard work put in by members of Radio Horton awarding long service certificates.

She commented: "It is my 40th year in the position and I said to myself I would go to 40 hospital radio stations in the year... Radio Horton is my 34th visit. Hospital Radio is my passion and during the year I have handed out nearly 7000 long service certificates. Hospital radio really does play a large part in the local community."

Radio Horton was started in 1964 by Ted Hanson M.B.E. and the late Graham Wilton, and it has been based at the Banbury Hospital since then.

June Snowden made presentations for 10 years' service to: Jane Holland, Ray Kent, Barry Newbery and Di Smith; 15 years service to: John Mayo and James Holbert; 20 years to Ian Fleming; 25 years to Kevin Matthews; 30 years to Stewart Green, 35 years to Olga Wilson and 50 years to Tom Wilson and Ted Hanson.

top centre: the beginning of Radio Horton

left from top: Stewart Green, Sam Smith & Vincent Heathcote; James Hulbert & Kay Austin with the Radio Horton sign; Maria Mayo & Bob Dainty; John Mayo, Maria Mayo & Barry Newbery; Kevin Matthews & Ian Fleming; June Snowden (Hospital Broadcast Association) & Edna Sparkes

right from top: Olga & Tom Wilson; Kay Austin, Sheri Smith & John Webb; Jane Holland, Ray Kent & Diane Smith; Kevin Matthews, Yolanda Jacob & Bob Dainty; Bill Warren, Maureen Paterson & Stewart Green; Olga & Tom Wilson with their long service certificates

below centre: long service award recipients



Sugarswell BUSINESS PARK

"...this is now unquestionably the finest rural development in the region"

THE BANBURY GUARDIAN

As you draw into the impressive Sugarswell Business Park entrance, you know that you've arrived somewhere very special indeed with its immaculately presented grounds long sweeping tarmac driveway, spectacular views of rolling Oxfordshire countryside and beautiful mature woodland. Arrival amongst the Sugarswell properties is no less spectacular; handsome stone offices with oak detailing, smart modern workshop and yet more of those wonderful views, it's simply fabulous

The many businesses which form Sugarswell not only enjoy such a peaceful working environment, with limitless car parking and modern facilities in beautiful surroundings, but also super-fast internet connectivity thanks to Suga Net Ltd (www.suganet.co.uk) which was first established at Sugarswell and now provides breathtakingly fast internet connectivity to the entire business park along with businesses and residences across Central England.

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TAKING THE plunge

dive into the sheepwash
with maggie chaplin

How do you bathe sheep? With difficulty. When they get mud in their coats it usually gets caked on, and it's almost always the undercarriage that takes the worst of it. A bucket of water over the back won't do; they need a full scale dousing and the water has to be worked through the fleece.

It's not even easy to wash a normally amenable pet sheep with the aid of a hosepipe, never mind deal with a flock whose only normal human contact from one year to the next involves some sort of indignity. Drenching, dagging, shearing and foot-trimming are hardly likely to top the ovine list of fun activities, so their co-operation can't be guaranteed.

In the Middle Ages sheep were washed before shearing. Fortunately, that's unnecessary today, because although they still get as many burrs, brambles and mud in their fleeces as their medieval counterparts, there's no longer any advantage to sprucing them up before clipping. Now it's much easier to clean the cut wool than it was in medieval times.

In the nineteenth century machinery was developed that meant washing and drying the wool could be done much more efficiently off the sheep than on it, but until the process became universally available, it was customary to bathe the flock in early summer. This was simply to clean the wool and was totally different from the practice of sheep dipping as a means of parasite control, which came much later.

With the advent of light-weight man-made fibres, wool is no longer valued as it once was, but in the Middle Ages it was a highly prized commodity. Cotswold fleeces were claimed to be second to none, and they were widely exported, and made the fortunes of many landowners and wool merchants. Clean fleeces fetched the best prices, and provided they were thoroughly dry when stored they had better keeping qualities. As an incidental benefit, washing the animals first made the shearer's job pleasanter.

Exactly when the practice of washing sheep originated is lost in the mists of time, but it certainly dates back several hundred years. At first, a convenient point in a river or stream would be chosen for the sheep to have their ablutions. This was the procedure for example at Sherborne, a shearing centre for the Winchcombe Abbey estate. The flock would be penned up next to the bank, then driven into the water in batches, where men armed with crooks and brushes would attempt to control and wash them.

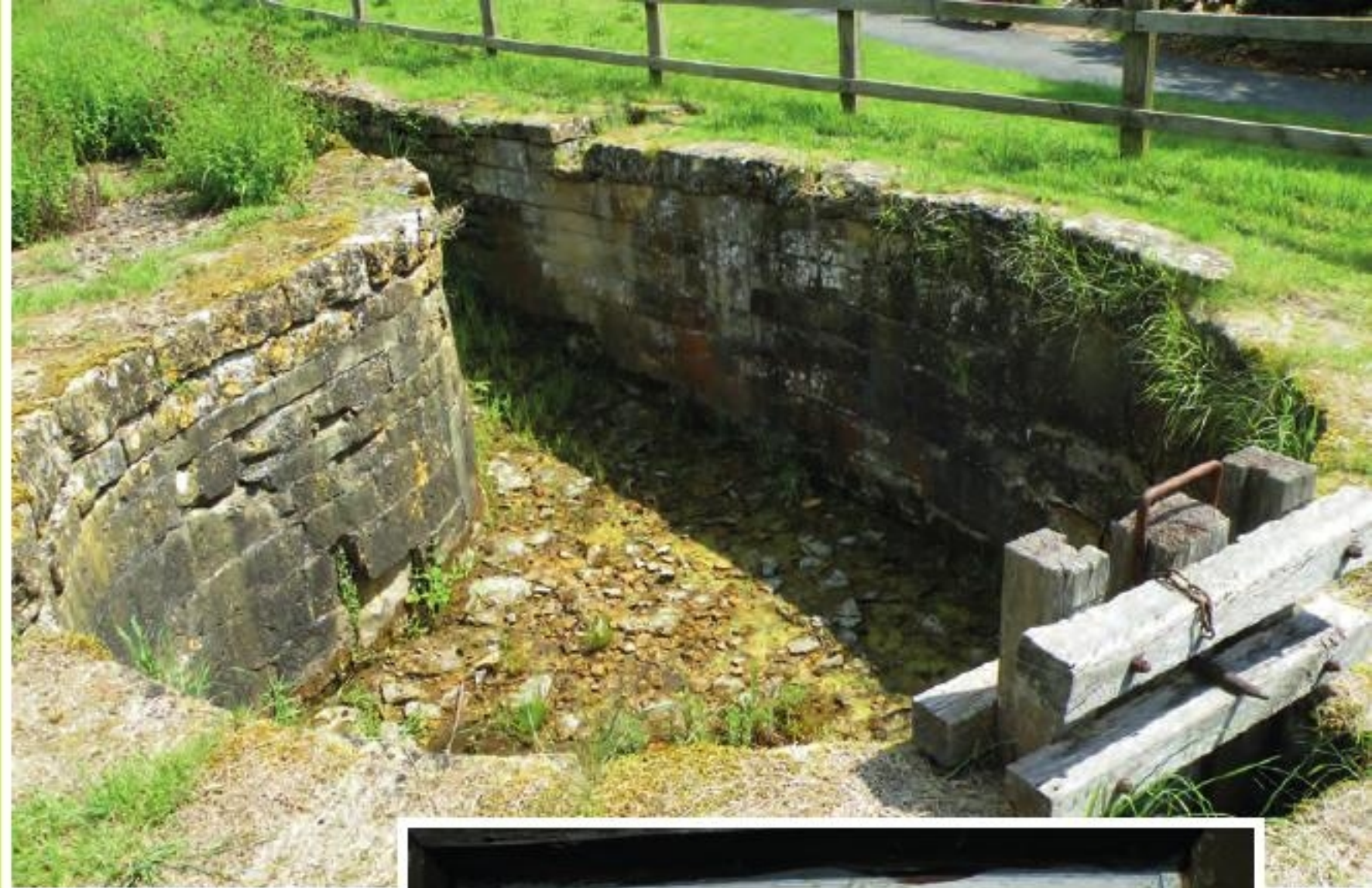
Because the labourers would sometimes spend hours waist high in cold water having to make sure that each animal was thoroughly submerged, sheep washing was not the favourite job on the farm. It was apparently, however, a popular spectator sport. Watchers were entertained when a sheep tried to make a run for it and had to be chased, or when one of the men suffered an accidental dunking.

Methods were devised to prevent total immersion of everyone other than the sheep, and various forms of elevated working platforms were used. At some point, and again it's not clear precisely when, purpose-built sheepwashes or wash pools came into use, which made it much simpler to control the animals and far easier for the operators to keep relatively dry.

The first major requirement when constructing a sheepwash was to find a suitable water source. Proximity to a spring or fishpond would do, or it could be sited in the bed of a stream. The sheep's body needed to be completely submerged, so a tank of water about five feet deep, able to contain two or three sheep at a time was necessary, which was usually filled by a spout at the top. The shape of the pool varied according to local custom and was normally made of dressed stone. It would commonly be fitted with a sluice gate to control the water outflow channel.



It was necessary to have pasture land adjacent to the washpool, both to collect the flock in readiness, and then to provide a suitable drying off area afterwards. The sheep were manoeuvred one at a time onto a flat platform next to the pool and then literally thrown into the water. They were usually pushed in backwards so they didn't see what was coming and had less time to panic. The shepherds would stand round the edge of the tank and control the animals with their crooks, pushing them



under the spout as well to make sure they were thoroughly wetted. The animals would be rubbed and pummeled with brushes to dislodge debris in their coats. A skilled washer would be expected to deal with seventy sheep in a day, but he'd also be expected to work all the daylight hours, so he probably spent an average of five or six minutes per sheep to do a thorough job.

The animals then made their own way out of the pool, in single file up a narrow ramp to the freedom of the nearby meadow where they'd spend the next two or three days whilst their wool dried out properly before clipping.



main image: the exit ramp leading up from the Cutsdean sheepwash

this page from top: the wash tank with water inlet and sluice gate at Cutsdean; information board at Cutsdean sheepwash; the washpool in the grounds of Kingham Mill; at Ascott-under-Wychwood the sheepwash is overgrown





TAKING THE plunge

Sheepwashes were a feature in rural England wherever large flocks were kept, and unsurprisingly, because wool production was a speciality of the Cotswolds, there was a higher concentration of them there. As mechanical cleaning of fleeces was gradually introduced washpools became redundant. Some were undoubtedly modified and repurposed for dipping for parasite control, but because of the potential danger to operators posed by the organophosphorus compounds used, sheep are rarely dipped nowadays. There are now much safer parasiticide products available that can be injected or poured on to the sheep, so the sheepwashes have fallen into disrepair.

Of the hundreds of sheepwashes that existed in the Cotswolds alone, there are probably only about a score still intact, and of these only a few have been restored and have public access.

There is a rectangular one near Ascott-under-Wychwood that was built in the 19th century and is supplied with water via a leat from the nearby fishpond. It's right next to a footpath and can be inspected if you're determined. An overgrowth of goose grass at this time of year makes it difficult to imagine it in use, but there's an illustrated notice board which explains its purpose.

Just north of Farmington in Gloucestershire there's a sheepwash which is referred to locally as the washpool. It's marked on the ordnance survey map of the area and nearby "sheep pens" and "washpool wood" are also indicated. In this case the tank is roughly oval and is supplied from a spring. Here too to see it properly you have to beat the weeds back.

This needs to be done with considerable care so as not to take an unwelcome plunge! There is an information board and a hazard warning notice.

Perhaps the nearest more-or-less intact sheepwash to Banbury is at Kingham, although this is on private land. It was constructed in a leat of the Mill there which is now a hotel. The rectangular tank is present but is full of reeds, and there are two sluice gates to control the flow of water, which is now no more than a trickle. The exit ramp for the sheep is missing and there is little indication of the structure's original purpose, but it makes an attractive water feature for the hotel and can just be seen from the road.

The best place to get a feel for what a sheepwash was really like is at Cutsdean in Gloucestershire, where there is a well-maintained 19th century version. Here the spring that used to supply the pool is now diverted under the nearby road instead of

into the wash tank, which is empty and so is clearly visible. The sluice gate, the water supply spout and the narrow ramp by which the sheep left the tank are still there. The surrounding area is mowed and well maintained and you can stand on the paved platform from which the sheep would have been pushed into the water and where the shepherds would have busied themselves with crooks and brushes, leaning over to rub and pummel the sheep, before sending them under the spout for a rinse and up the ramp to freedom.

Today it's a peaceful spot. There's nothing to hear but the cascade of water from the spring across the road, and the occasional buzz of a bumblebee feeding in the flowers by the fence. What a contrast it would have been a couple of hundred years ago on wash day. Hundreds of confused anxious sheep awaiting their turn for a dunk; two or three thrashing and splashing in the tank, and others making a soggy dash for freedom, all bleating for Britain. There might have been a bit of shouting and swearing by the shepherds too. All in all, a cacophony of sound.

Sheepwashes have long outlived their usefulness, but those that remain give an insight into how dramatically some aspects of life have changed over the centuries. Washing the woollies today is far less stressful than it was a few hundred years ago, both for the shepherd and the sheep! ❀

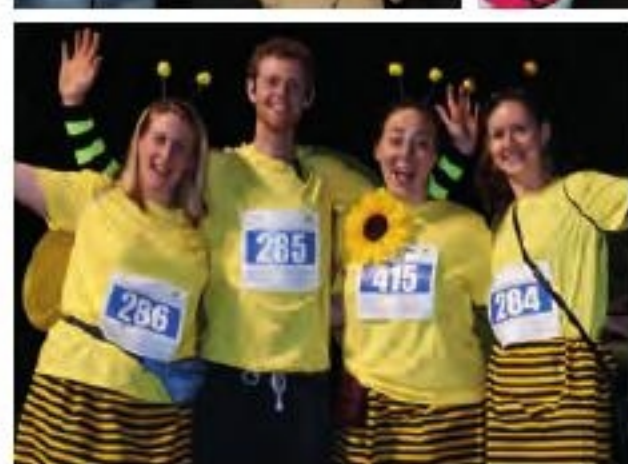
from top: Farmington washpool showing the throwing platform and overgrown waterspout. The escape ramp is in the foreground; the washpool at Kingham Mill; the throwing platform at Cutsdean

with thanks to Kingham Mill Hotel for permission to photograph their sheepwash





the 8th midnight walk



images by Tudor Photography. See them at www.tudorphotography.co.uk/KH14

Nearly 500 walkers took part in the 2014 Katharine House Hospice Midnight Walk. This year there was a carnival theme so many walkers were in fancy dress or wearing bright accessories and the event started with an attempt to break the record for the longest conga at midnight! Alongside the walkers, there were over 170 marshals and other volunteers working through the night to ensure that everything ran smoothly.

The sponsorship pledges on the night amounted to over £56,000 so, once Gift Aid is added, the final total will be over £60,000. Each year the hospice cares for over 700 patients in the in-patient unit and day hospice in Adderbury and throughout the local community in patients' own homes. The previous seven walks have raised over £600,000 to help fund the hospice services.





A visit to Whichford pottery can always be much recommended and now there's another very good reason to stop by - the Straw Kitchen restaurant.

The Straw Kitchen is the brainchild of Maia Keeling and Christine Battine, two highly creative young women who have landed in Whichford via a circuitous and entertaining route.

Maia and Christine both have a background in organisations that promote sustainability and abhor food waste and both have worked in city farms in inner city London. More recently they have both spent time with the famous Giffords Circus, acting, dancing and 'doing their bit'. With experiences like this behind them, you could expect something different from the duo's cafe - and with The Straw Kitchen you get just that...

The Straw Kitchen, as the name suggests, is made out of straw!

Straw bales have been encased with a large amount of clay, readily available at the pottery next door and then painted, again, with clay paint sourced from the pottery. There is a lovely window inside the bistro, near the serving hatch, where one can see the straw inside the walls of the structure.

This sustainability is very much at the heart of what Christine and Maia do and this is reflected in the menu at whichford.

Maia commented: 'Everything here is home made, home baked and home grown - we

make our own pickles, jams and bread - everything we serve is very seasonal - we have broad beans here today that have come from just next door...'

Christine pointed out that eating at The Straw Kitchen could be educational too.

"We are about serving good food and preventing food waste. We used to work with the charity 'Feed the 5000' that investigates food waste by the multi national supermarkets. We used to hold banquets in cities produced with cast aside food.'

Whilst such worthy principles would always fall on sympathetic ears in parts of central London, we wondered whether the ethos could be transferred to the more 'leafy *Four Shires*'?

"Serving fresh, good, seasonal food goes down as well here as it did in Hackney," said Christine.



ex-straw-dinary!

THE STRAW KITCHEN IS THE PLACE TO BE

words: *Jeremy Wilton*

pictures: *Ellie Dunford-Wood*

"It has been a little bit of a gamble, but we seem to be doing well here in Whichford. The city farm cafes are also prospering," said Maia.

All of which is very good, but what was the food like?

Very simple...but very good.

I tried the chorizo and feta cheese on toast with a drizzle of Hook Norton honey and a luscious green salad. I could have gone for the broad bean bruschetta with beans, peas and mint, plus feta on a toasted olive and thyme sour dough bread with salad - or a beetroot and feta cheese toast arrangement.

All of these dishes were prepared within five minutes and were as fresh as a daisy - gorgeous.

Whilst I waited at the serving bar, the cakes and coffees were disappearing before my eyes, such was the demand for the freshly baked produce. A father appeared with his son and asked for the a piece of lemon drizzle cake and two spoons to share it with... his son quickly pointed out that he would prefer to have a piece all to himself...!

All of the dishes are served on Whichford pottery and there's a fresh kids menu.

Why do Christine and Maia do it?

"Because it's fun," they reply. "It is great to see people enjoying fresh, locally produced food. Seriously. There is a little bit of education here too."

Well, I have to say, the lessons were extremely well received. ♦

Opening Hours:

Monday & Tuesday - Closed

Wednesday to Friday - 9am to 5pm

Saturdays & Bank Holidays - 10am to 4pm

Sundays - 11am to 4pm

The Straw Kitchen, Whichford Pottery can be contacted on 01608 684416 or by email to thestrawkitchen@whichfordpottery.com





*Stephen & Tara at The Bell
picture by Harry Rhodes*

THE BELL

Great Bourton

Stephen and Tara Coots William have tied the knot! Following a year at The Bell in Great Bourton they got married last month at the church and held the reception at The Bell in the village (pictured). Stephen and Tara are spending the beginning of August preparing for the Fairport Convention festival taking place in Cropredy, just down the road.

STAG'S HEAD

Swalcliffe

Faith and Stomatis Trivizas have recently taken over the Stag's Head in Swalcliffe and Stomatis's Greek influences are beginning to show in the pub cookery. As well as a good Stifado (greek beef stew and spices), there are also some very tasty Greek chicken kebabs up for grabs!



THE STAR

Sulgrave

The Star at Sulgrave has recently undergone a total renovation using furniture supplied by the second hand company in Banbury 'Second Time Around'. Pub goes all agree that the final result is quite fantastic. Look out for their garden party that is taking place on August 25th. The Star has a two acre garden that has recently been replanted for the season. The Star Inn scooped three awards at the Hook Norton Brewery 'Pride of Hooky Awards' last month. The Star has also gained awards with Trip Advisor as Marketing Pub of the Year 2014 and Food champion in 2013.



THE WHARF

Fenny Compton

Landlady Penny and pub regular, soldier Philip Baxter completed a 100 km around London at night charity cycle event during June. They were raising money for the Breast Cancer Campaign; landlady Penny is currently in remission. Penny and Philip have raised £1800 so far and hope to top £2000. Their charity page is: virginmoneygiving.com/team/wharf. Penny is pictured below with her bicycle

THE REINEDEERE

Banbury

The new landlady at The Reineedere is talented artist Tanicha Boneham. She has recently shown work at The Mill in Banbury as part of the 'Parched Artists' collective. At the pub Tanicha is looking to build up the food trade at the popular Banbury venue. Number one on the menu at the moment is the Reindeere bubble and squeak.

THE CHURCH HOUSE

Horsefair, Banbury

Jane Washburn has returned as landlady at the Church House in Banbury after four months off recovering from a minor operation. She is now putting her best foot forward. 'I've been limping quite well' said Jane!



THE SWAN

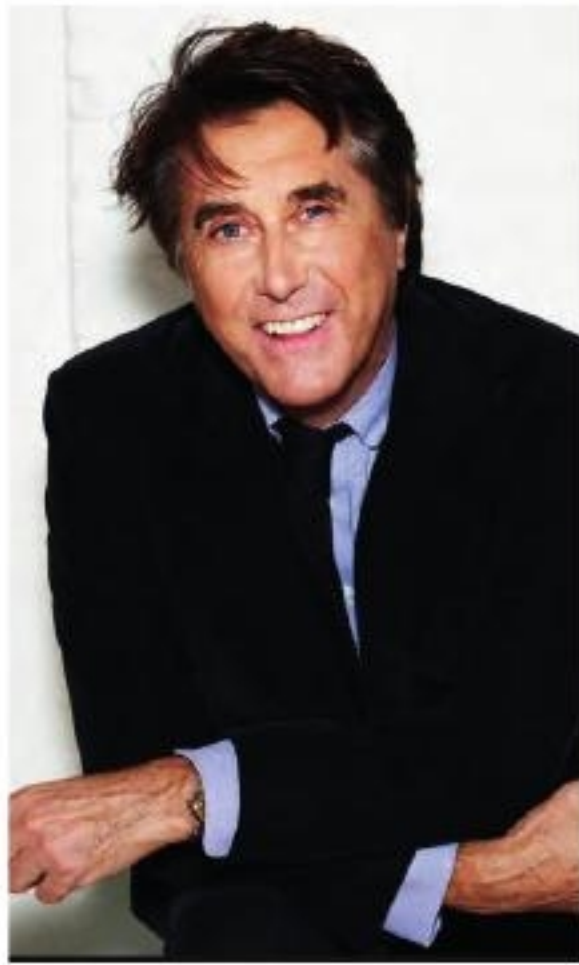
South Bar, Banbury

Landlord Alan 'O Donovan is pleased that The Swan is building up a good reputation as a music and sports bar, with live bands and televised sport at a premium in the pub. Enjoying the sport recently was 'Homeland' actor Damien

Lewis who came in to enjoy a beer and watch last month's World Cup matches. Barmaid Hannah Boone (pictured with landlord Alan) is looking to raise money for the John Radcliffe Hospital children's ward by abseiling 100m down the building in September - good luck Hannah!



contact Four Shires with your pub stories at copy@fourshires.co.uk ... Cheers!



THE PEACOCK *Oxhill*

Yvonne Hamlett is still serving delicious meals at The Peacock, prompting visits by actors from Stratford upon Avon and the master of musical sophistication, Bryan Ferry. He would be delighted with the August Bank Holiday fare, for not only is good food available, but there is a music festival running throughout the weekend. Look out for Pete Watkins, Chris Gibbons and the Ambassadors of Groove, amongst others. Funds raised will go to St Lawrence Church roof appeal and Warwickshire Air Ambulance.

THE CARPENTERS ARMS *Lower Boddington*

Pub regulars at this Warwickshire venue are quite used to getting wet on the inside, but a new innovation introduced by Landlady Marge Williams will now see regulars getting wet on the outside too! Barman Kevin Williams commented: 'We had such a success with the children's paddling pool last year we decided that the adults should enjoy some water too. We decided to install a hot tub at the pub where anyone can enjoy a glass of Pimms or a pint of Hooky. Bring a towel and a change of clothes!'

THE GEORGE *Brailes*

There's a new, traditional style inn sign - replacing a computer-generated letter G at the George Inn at Brailes. Local artist Christopher Barrett hand painted the sign, based on a print by 18th century caricaturist James Gillray (although it also includes the artist's black labrador, Rocket). The sign was installed by Pillerton Priors craftsman Jim Wheeler, hanging it from a home grown oak beam.

The sign portrays George, Prince of Wales - later Prince Regent and George IV - picking his teeth with a fork, having demolished a heavy meal and a considerable quantity of wine. His celebrated corpulence led to the nickname of 'The Prince of Whales'. The George Inn at Brailes has five letting bedrooms and is open all day, seven days a week, from 12 noon. Its proprietor is Baggy Saunders, who also has the Horseshoe and the Black Horse at nearby Shipston-on-Stour.

THE WHEATSHEAF *Banbury*

New owners of Banbury pub, The Wheatsheaf, Adam Thompson and Esme Jones are starting to inject new life into the pub through music. Adam actually performed at the pub seven years ago and has hosted several events at the venue. He hopes to turn it into a local hub for live music.



THE NEW INN *Wroxton Heath*

It seems The New Inn at Wroxton Heath has become the 'new Indian'! The old 'New Inn' signs have been taken down and 'The Indian Queen' is the new name above the door... The new owner, it is said, owns a chain of 'Indian Queens' and has formed a deal with the brewery.



THE WHITE HORSE *Wroxton, AND...*

THE DUCK ON THE POND *South Newington*

Glorious hanging baskets at both these *Four Shires* hosteries. The White Horse has just been awarded its Cask Marque - a nationally recognised award for good beer.

THE RED LION *Culworth*

Owners Bronni and Justin Lefreve have just celebrated five years of ownership and have achieved a 'certificate of excellence' for the busy, 'buzzing' restaurant. The lovely garden at The Red Lion is home to some pet pigs and hens - say hello to them next time you're in south Northants!



AUBERGINE, TOMATO
& MOZZARELLA STACKS

Fresh mozzarella soaks up flavors, especially the olive oil, thyme, marjoram and lemon in this quick dish - a perfect light lunch to remind you of sunny Italian travels.

What you'll need:

1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil
2 tsp chopped fresh thyme
Handfull fresh basil leaves
1 tsp finely grated lemon zest
Crushed red pepper flakes
Salt and ground black pepper
12 big tomato slices
8 thick aubergine slices
2 balls sliced mozzarella
Chopped assorted peppers

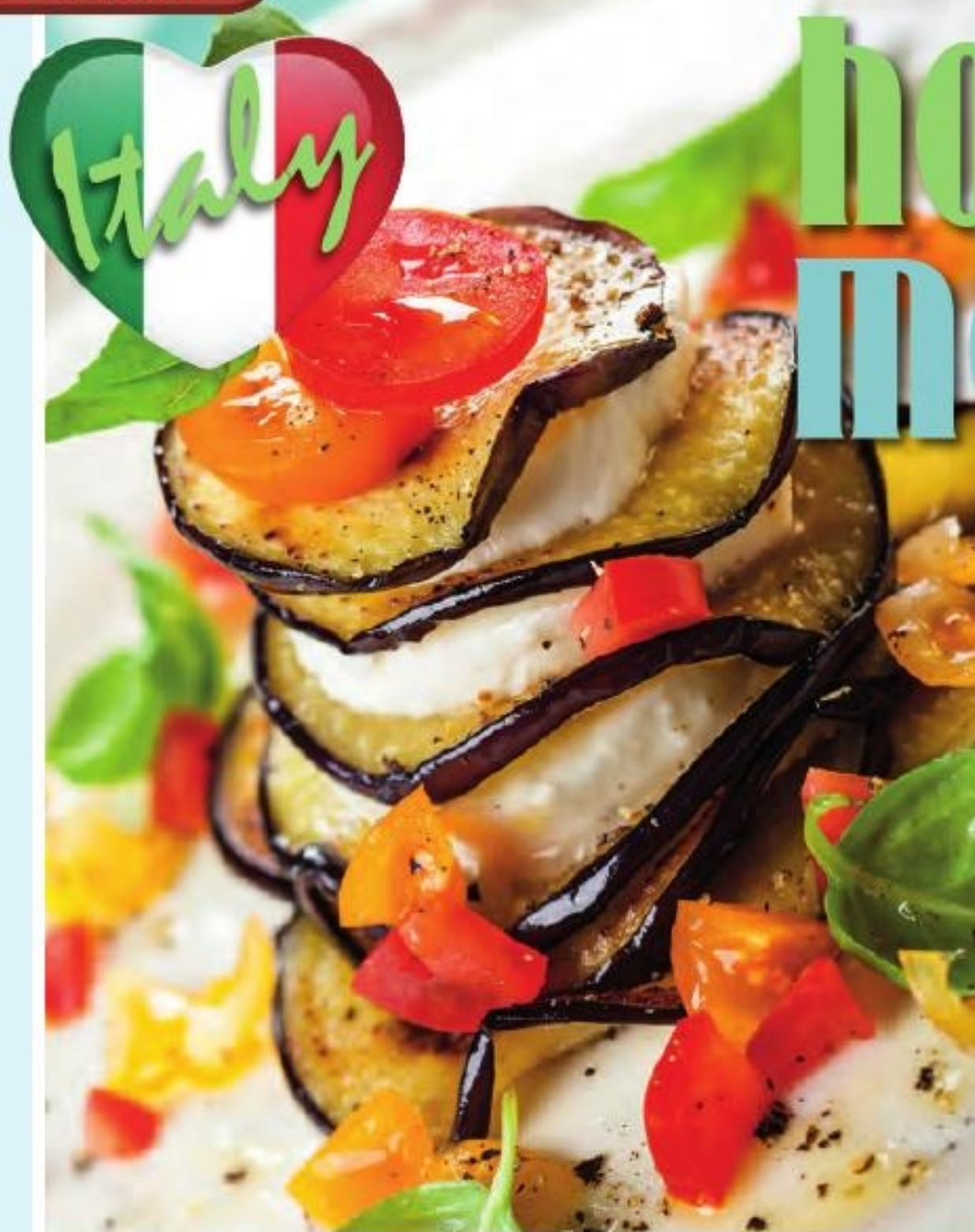
What to do:

Mix the olive oil, thyme, lemon zest, red pepper flakes and seasoning together. Brush onto the tomato and aubergine slices and marinate the mozzarella in the remaining oil.

Grill the aubergine for a couple of minutes each side.

To serve, put a tomato slice on four plates. Top each with a slice of aubergine, then a slice

of mozzarella. Repeat until it's all assembled. Drizzle with any remaining oil, throw on the basil and peppers and serve with a salad and some bread.

holiday
menu

HOUMOUS

Pour yourself a glass of ouzo and tuck into a gorgeous Greek *Meze*, a selection of small dishes, eaten together with pitta bread and olives. Many can be bought ready made, such as Dolmades (stuffed vine leaves), spicy cold meats and sausages, sun dried tomatoes and aubergine dip. But houmous is easy to make yourself and this red pepper version is particularly delicious.

What you'll need:

1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil
400g can chickpeas, drained and rinsed
3 red peppers, roasted
Juice of a lemon
1 garlic clove, crushed
2 tbsp olive oil
2 tbsp tahini paste

*What to do:*

Whizz everything together in a blender until smooth - loosen with a little water if you like. If you don't have a blender, mash it until smooth with a fork or masher. This is so simple to make and it will keep in fridge for up to five days. Serve in the sunshine with pitta bread and a selection of other dips and small dishes.

**The Bell**

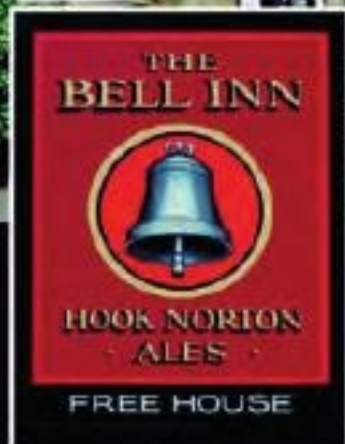
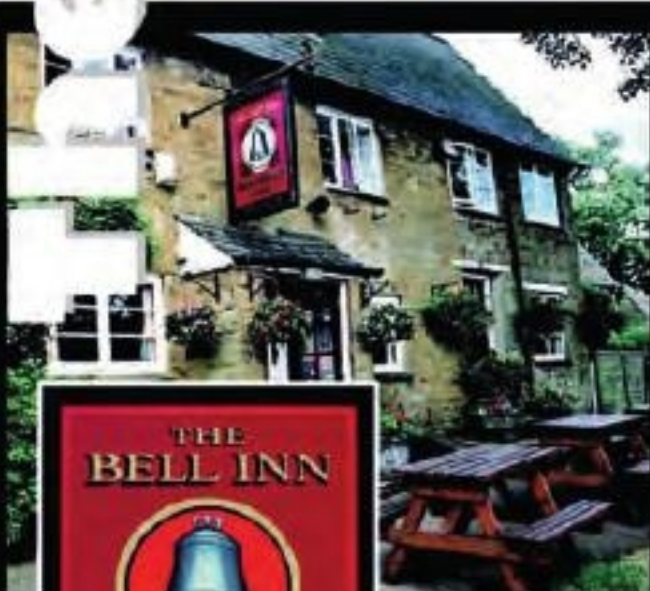
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www.thebellshenington.co.uk

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At The Bell we do not do gimmicks or offers. We aim for good value, home-cooked food using local fresh produce served in warm, comfortable, unpretentious surroundings. We are unashamedly an 'old fashioned' village Inn. Gluten free and vegetarian dishes are always available.

SUNDAY ROAST £8:95

Situated off the A422 Stratford upon
Avon to Banbury Road

SEAFOOD BOUILLABAISSE

This will take a little more effort, but it's certainly worth it, especially if you have guests to impress!

What you'll need:

Pinch of saffron threads
1 tbsp hot water
1.8 litres fish stock
2 x 400g tins of chopped tomatoes in juice
1 leek, white section only, thinly sliced
1 carrot, peeled, finely chopped
1 celery stick, ends trimmed, finely chopped
300g firm white fish fillet, chopped into 3cm cubes
About 250g king prawns, peeled but leaving tails intact
About 640g mussels, scrubbed and debearded
Salt & ground black pepper
1/4 cup chopped fresh parsley
1 French baguette, sliced

For the Capsicum Rouille

1/2 loaf (about 210g) unsliced white bread, crusts removed
About 125g roasted red pepper (in a jar, drained)
3 large garlic cloves, peeled
1 fresh red chilli, deseeded
1 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
Salt and ground black pepper

What to do:

Combine the saffron and hot water in a small bowl and set aside to infuse. Place the stock, tomato, leek, carrot and celery in a large saucepan and bring to the boil. Then reduce heat and cook, uncovered, for 10 minutes, until the vegetables begin to soften.

Meanwhile, make the capsicum rouille. Place the bread in a large bowl and cover with plenty of cold water. Leave to soak for a few minutes. Use

your hands to squeeze the excess water from the bread. Put in a blender with the peppers, garlic, chilli and oil, and blend until smooth. Season with salt and pepper. Transfer to a small serving bowl.

Add saffron mixture to tomato mixture and cook for a further 10 minutes or until vegetables are tender. Add fish, prawns and mussels to the soup and cook, covered, for a further 2-3 minutes or until seafood is just cooked and mussels open. Discard any unopened mussels.

Taste and season with salt and pepper. Ladle soup among serving bowls and sprinkle with parsley. Top with a dollop of capsicum rouille and serve with slices of baguette.



Paella originated in Valencia on the eastern coast of Spain. It is now made in every region of Spain, using just about any ingredient that goes well with rice. There are as many versions of paella - they can contain chicken, pork, shellfish, fish, squid, beans, peas, artichokes or peppers. Saffron, the spice that also turns the rice a wonderful golden colour is an essential part of the dish.

EASY PAELLA

Paella is best cooked over a barbecue, to ensure even cooking - because the pan needs to be very big!

What you'll need:

1 tbsp olive oil
500g chicken breast fillets (preferably with skin), cut into bite-sized pieces
1 onion, finely chopped
1 chorizo sausage, chopped
200g basmati rice
1 teaspoon ground saffron
425g can chopped tomatoes, drained
2 garlic cloves, crushed
1 red chilli, finely chopped
500ml chicken stock
250g cooked prawns, peeled
A handful of cooked mussels
425g can cannellini beans
100g peas
2 tbsp chopped coriander
Lemon wedges, to serve

What you'll need:

Heat the oil in a large, deep pan. Cook the chicken pieces, turning until golden and cooked. Set aside. Add the onion and chorizo to the pan and cook for two minutes.

Add the rice and saffron and cook, stirring, while adding the drained chopped tomatoes, capsicum, garlic, chilli and stock. Bring to the boil, then cook, stirring occasionally, for 15 minutes or until all the liquid has been absorbed.

Return the chicken to the pan with the prawns, mussels, cannellini beans and peas.

Toss and heat through for one minute. Last of all, stir in the coriander and serve immediately with lemon wedges and hunks of bread or a big green salad.

*Lustau Fino La Ina NV ...
One of the most aromatic and
intense of all Finos, the best
aperitif known to man!*

Just six years ago, world-renowned wine authority and Master of Wine Jancis Robinson OBE, wrote: "Sherry. In a nutshell: The world's most neglected wine treasure." Now, Sherry is HOT! Sommeliers, writers and key influencers in the wine industry recognise that Sherry deserves proper attention as a great wine.

Many of today's younger converts have discovered there's nothing else quite like it as a chilled aperitif to wake up the taste buds, or as a versatile partner to a variety of different cuisine. Complex and distinctive, Lustau Fino La Ina NV is one such wine, and worthy of its iconic status.

A consistent award winner, this affordable gem won the International Trophy (Best in Show) Decanter World Wine Awards 2014, Gold Medal (Best in Class) International Wine & Spirit Competition 2012, and Gold Medal - International Wine Challenge 2011.

Matured in the town of Puerto de Santa María, considered by many experts to be the home of the finest classic Fino, the La Ina NV is pale straw in colour, ultra dry, tangy and wonderfully mouth watering. The full almond flavour is intense and it can be enjoyed as an aperitif or alongside a variety of food including tapas, hard cheeses such as Manchego, Gazpacho, olives, oysters, prawns, crab and oily fish, including sardines, smoked mackerel, tuna and Sushi.

"Clean and fresh in a classic style... This has a vibrant bite on the attack, a complex mid-palate and a lovely long length." 17 points - Decanter 2010

At SH Jones Wines £11.99

Mention *Four Shires* and receive 10% discount at SH Jones Wines stores.

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wine of the month

The Oxford Wine Festival, 23rd – 24th August

Sample, sniff and savour award winning and fine wines at SH Jones Wines' stand at this exciting new Festival. Held inside the historic Oxford Union building with live music, food, and tutored tastings from some of the world's leading wine authorities, for full details and tickets visit: www.oxfordwinefestival.org

Discovering Islay Whiskies, 26th September in Banbury

Islay, known as the "Queen of the Hebrides," is home to eight distilleries, and famous for producing the world's most distinct and full-flavoured single malt whiskies. Join SH Jones Wines to hear about the history and taste interesting and classic examples from each of these distilleries. To book, tel: 01295 251179; email: banbury@shjones.com or visit the shop.

Location: The Old Winehouse, 27 High Street, Banbury, OX16 5EW

Time: 7pm - 9pm

Tickets: £15.00



PETER JONES *meets...*

Niki Lauda *at Whateley Hall*

This month we speak very briefly to former three times World Champion Formula One racing driver Niki Lauda. Niki held a press conference for quite a few motoring journalists and the *Four Shires* is lucky enough to grab his attention for a few moments.

Niki is now the non-executive Chairman of the Mercedes AMG Petronas F1 team who are based at Brackley.

Niki is quite famous for his colourful language and this was evident from the first two or three conversations he was involved with.

He told several of us that one of the things that disappointed him most when he first visited the factory was the number of different makes of cars in the staff car park at Brackley.

He commented on this and pointed out that he had: 'introduced a staff car scheme and now you only see Mercedes cars there in the parking spaces'

But Niki first visit to Banbury was back in July 1973 when he came to a party at The Whately Hall Hotel – which for those of us who were at, will never forget.

The Marlboro cigarette company had, the previous year, entered the F1 World Championship as sponsors of the BRM and Frank Williams' teams. However as the John Player Special cigarette company were the race sponsors there were geographical limits placed on how close Marlboro could advertise. Anywhere within 15 miles of the circuit was 'out of bounds' to Marlboro. This meant Banbury was the closest town outside the exclusion zone with facilities to host the travelling Marlboro ensemble.

Banbury's Whately Hall Hotel was chosen as the team's base for their launch party and the whole town was decorated in the sponsor's red and white colours. On the Thursday before the race, the racing cars



were lined up in front of the hotel and a party to end all parties was thrown by the teams involved and the sponsors.

The great and good of the town were invited and partied away with the teams. This amazing picture from the *Four Shires'* archives shows racing drivers: Jacky Ickx, Clay Reggazoni, Niki Lauda, Howden Ganley, Henri Pescarolo and Nanni Galli.

Towards the end of the night everyone who had attended the party were invited to put their business cards in a hat and a lucky 40 of us were entertained to a day at the races.

The Grand Prix was won by Peter Revson following Jody Scheckter's first lap crash.

Marlboro had provided us with hats and other souvenirs and our coach was decorated in those famous red and white colours. However, we had to stop about 10 miles from Silverstone and remove them all, so as not to upset the John Player Special sponsors.

It really was a remarkable recollection from Niki Lauda, Banbury and the party registering a place at the very beginning of this illustrious racing career.

Following his brief chat with the motoring journalists of the world, with a grin and a wave he went back into the giant Mercedes motor home!

Presumably the grin on his face that weekend was even bigger when his team driver, Lewis Hamilton, won the race! ♦



pictures show: Niki Lauda; line up of 70s racers: Jacky Ickx, Clay Reggazoni, Niki Lauda, Howden Ganley, Henri Pescarolo and Nanni Galli; Jacky Ickx with model on his knee



old glories

words:
Bruce Cox

pictures:
Roger Cooper





Many years ago some humourist came out with the ironic witticism that “nostalgia isn’t what is used to be”...and these days that tongue-in-cheek observation is even more apt. Nostalgia is now a flourishing industry in its own right and you only have to visit the magazine racks at W.H.Smith to realize that. Once you have pushed your way past the blokes who seem to consider it some sort of lending library browsing area, you will see magazine after magazine devoted to

the glories of the past...classic cars and motorcycles, steam railways, vintage aircraft, tractors, buses, boats, even old time rock and roll. You name it and there’s a periodical that will give you a monthly ride down Memory Lane.

There’s also a plethora of events where you can experience the past in person and two of the biggest of those events took place near Banbury in June.

The Vintage Motor Cycle Club’s ‘Banbury Run’ is the world’s largest gathering of vintage and veteran motorcycles. Every June it sees six ►





old glories

hundred riders chugging around the lanes of South Warwickshire and North Oxfordshire from the starting point at the Motor Heritage Centre, Gaydon on machines that vary from a mere eighty years old for the youngest machines allowed in the event (!!!) to pioneer two-wheelers that in some cases date from the nineteenth century!

The event gets its name not because Banbury was its original starting point over 60 years ago but because Banbury was actually a favourite destination and gathering point for test riders from the various motorcycle factories in Birmingham and Coventry early in the 20th century. They figured that if their company's bikes could climb the steep Edgehill escarpment, then they were up to the job they were meant for. And after that climb, then the cafes in Banbury provided a great reason to cruise on into the town and enjoy a cup of tea together while comparing notes and extolling the virtues of their particular machines. The



testers used to tell each other "see you on the Banbury run" and the VMCC has wonderfully carried on that tradition.

In the days when those old bikes were struggling up Sunrising Hill, the heavy hauling around England was being done by the new steam-powered traction engines and the big old cart horses were starting to enjoy a rather easier life. These new-fangled engines were also seen performing a lot of stationary duties, hooked up to everything from fairground rides to portable sawmills cutting planks

and beams for the building of houses and barns. They brought the industrial revolution hissing and clanking its way into the countryside.

Also taking place each June is the Banbury Steam Fair (actually just out of town at Bloxham).

Like the Banbury Run it is one of the biggest events of its kind in the country and, as this feature shows, is another wonderful day out for watching the past come to life through the imaginary but obligatory 'rose coloured spectacles'. ❀





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The Boddington Ball made a stylish return last month. By kind permission of Stuart and Polly Nichols, 500 mainly local residents kicked off with a drinks reception generously sponsored by Andrew Baughan, swiftly followed by colourful cocktails, and then a sit down dinner and dancing to "The Daggers". All credit to Taste Events - Napton, for providing such a delicious meal for so many people.

Needless to say Boddington was partying 'til dawn!

Boddington Ball

clockwise from above: the committee: Phil Nichols, Anne Wadland, Rowan Adams, Sarah Irvine, Ed Nichols; Amy-Marie Brown & Emma Boniface; the James family; Tash Rose, Tammy Webster, Laura Cochrane; Bill Adams & Chris Holland; Martin Wadland, Simon & Claire Bradshaw, Angela Wadland, Chris & Colin Holland, Sue & Philip Rice and Shirley Knight; The Daggers Band; dinner & dancing; Sunny from So Cocktails

photography by Chloe Ely (www.chloeelyphotography.com)



Dallas Burston Polo Club is celebrating after raising an impressive £20,000 for the charity Ladies Fighting Breast Cancer at its annual glittering event last month.

The club in Southam near Royal Leamington Spa was blessed with beautiful weather which reflected the stunning outfits and impressive hats on display as the guests gathered to watch two polo matches, enjoy lunch and the auction hosted by BBC TV auctioneer Will Farmer. This year's big auction attraction was a stunning pink diamond set, generously donated by Bone of London jewellers, whilst stunning hats donated by top milliners including Philip Treacy, Sally Harper and Victoria Grant also sparked a bidding war.

Face of British Polo, Karl Ude-Martinez hosted proceedings and with a fashion show, plenty of polo, a mouth-watering lunch and goody bags, the day was enjoyed by many.

The next big event will be DBPC Polo in the Park, held on Sunday 7th September, 11am-5pm. There will be a host of family friendly attractions including polo, jousting performances, fun fair and a catering village - tickets cost £10 per car and can be bought from the Ticket Factory (0844 338 8000). For more information call 01926 811 111 or visit the website at www.dbpoloclub.com



DALLAS BURSTON POLO CLUB LADIES DAY

pictures by Jane Collier at Janus Photography



1: Capt Nick Watson, Capt Johnny Hathaway White, Capt Jamie Garton, Sgt Alasdair Grant, Captain Folarin Kuku, Tpr L Hartley, Tpr Cain Hayward-Hughes, Csgt Tim Johnson; 2: Laura-Eve Thyer, Chloe-Jasmine Whichello; 3: ladies day polo; 4: Sarah Wigley & Russell Blakely; 5: Will Farmer; 6: Millie Seneviratne, Gemma Jenkins, Jenna McCabe, Natasha Haywood; 7: Matias Amaya, Jenny Rigby, David Jupp, Mrs Sallyann Burston, Jake Rigby, Grant Collett; 8: Katie Ashby, Stacey Wood, Emily Brooks of The Bombshell Belles; 9: Karl Ude-Martinez, Katie McPhillemy, Carmel and Victoria Grant; 10: Dan Lloyd, James Tynan, Lesley & Jerry Taylor, Suz Carney, Major Les and Karen Kibble; 11: James Harding, Seeta Patel, Jake Crimmin, Susannah Burston, Francesca Watson



THE ORIGINAL
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this year's festival – a great success! ☆☆☆





Last month, Oxfordshire's beautiful Great Tew Park played host to Cornbury Music Festival, the nation's most eccentric and charming open air party.

Around 20,000 music fans saw terrific performances from *Simple Minds*, *Jools Holland* with his special guests *Mel C*, *Marc Almond* and *Ruby Turner*, *Arrested Deelopment*, *The Feeling*, *10CC*, *Suzanne Vega*, *Kacey Musgraves*, *Kid Creole & the Coconuts*, X-Factor alumni *Sam Bailey*, *Luke Friend* and *Scouting for Girls* amongst others. On the final night, Cornbury-goers were treated to an extraordinary exclusive UK festival performance from *The Gipsy Kings*, who brought the festival down with their infectious energy and roaring choruses.

Alongside the music, comedy legends *Al Murray*, *Mark Watson* and *Jeremy Hardy* kept audiences amused at the Absolute Radio Comedy Stage, whilst younger-festival goers were occupied with a world of entertainment over the weekend; From the rollicking Kids Zone fun fair to musical theatre and magic shows as well as Bollywood dancing and animation workshops and *Circus Kaos* performances.

Respite from the action during the 3-day event could be found at the lovingly restored *Vintage Mobile Cinema* which screened a mini short-film festival for all ages, at *QI* and *Unbounds Festival of Words* as well as the *Café Nero* tent which boasted an impressive line-up of intimate acoustic sessions throughout the weekend. Guests spotted in the VIP Area included *Orlando Bloom*, *Patsy Palmer* and festival regular *Dom Jolly* as well as the newly-hitched Mr & Mrs Matt and Sara Skeath who celebrated their special day at the festival. Another new import for the 2014 festival was the stunning vintage cider 3Cs Cider, stocked only in Fortnum and Masons, that was sampled exclusively by Cornbury Music Festival artists.

Anyone who was unable to make the festival or those who (quite rightly) wish to relive some of the musical highlights of the weekend can purchase the Cornbury Music Festival 2014 live compilation, produced by long-time Cornbury partner Abbey Road Studios. All proceeds from this CD are proudly donated to Helen & Douglas House; the world's first children's hospice. Order the CD online at www.abbeyroad.com/live. ❖

KING SIZED problems

words: Bruce Cox
photographs: Kwame Lestrade
reproduced courtesy of the
Royal Shakespeare Company



*Prince Hal (Alex Hassall) at his father's bedside...
He contemplates the crown that will soon be his to wear*

“Uneasy is the head that wears a crown” says the King of England in the third act of Shakespeare’s *Henry IV Part II* after a particularly restless and sleepless night. And he was well qualified to remark upon that subject. Not only did he have his own kingly problems to keep him awake (including dealing with a revolution) but, in addition, his conscience never let him forget that he had actually assumed the crown illegally.

Henry had become King by usurping his predecessor, Richard II, and then sanctioning his murder. By these actions he had become the first king to assume the monarchy illegally since King Stephen had stolen the crown from Queen Matilda, the rightful heir of Henry I, before she even knew her father was dead. That was some two centuries earlier and led to 20 years of civil war.

The king that Henry IV had usurped was Richard II. He was the son of Edward, Prince of Wales, known to history as the Black Prince and famous as the military commander who defeated the French at the significant battles of

Crecy and Poitiers. He, in turn, was the eldest son of Edward III and this line of succession led directly to the English throne.

On the other hand, Henry IV was the son of John of Gaunt, the Duke of Lancaster who, though one of the most powerful men in the kingdom, was still only the fourth son of Edward III. As such, he was unable to provide Henry, his son and heir, with a true and clear progression to the crown.

Edward III outlived his son, the Black Prince, by a year - so when he died in 1377, the throne went to his 10 year-old grandson, Richard. Due to the boy's youth, the country was at first administered by his uncles and other nobles, notably the Dukes of Clarence, Lancaster, York and Gloucester, the remaining sons of Edward III.

But as Richard grew older he assumed the reins of power himself and, as well as displaying all of the capricious and wilful traits of a teenager, magnified them a thousand-fold and more. Especially once he realized that being king meant that his word and his whims could not be denied.

By the time he was in his early twenties he had several times raised taxes to fund his extravagant lifestyle, taken lands from their rightful and often noble owners to give to his favourite courtiers, been one of the causes of a 'peasant's revolt' and had even been implicated in the murder of his uncle, the Duke of Gloucester. To say that he was not a popular king is a massive understatement.

His reign, in fact, effectively kick-started a cycle of more than a hundred years of regicide, revolution, long drawn-out and bloody wars with France and even a savage civil conflict, the Wars of the Roses between the royal houses of York and Lancaster.

This was the century of murders and general mayhem that most typified the bloody rule of the Plantagenet family and which lasted until Richard III was unhorsed and killed at the battle of Bosworth Field in 1485. The crown which had fallen from Richard's brow on to the battlefield was placed upon the head of Henry Tudor, thus making him King Henry VII and the first in a new dynasty that also had its own share of bloodletting to come.

And so endeth the history lesson - though from these few hundred words it must be obvious why, just over a hundred years later, a young

Henry IV (Jasper Britton) reconciled on his deathbed with his wayward son, Prince Hal (Alex Hassall)



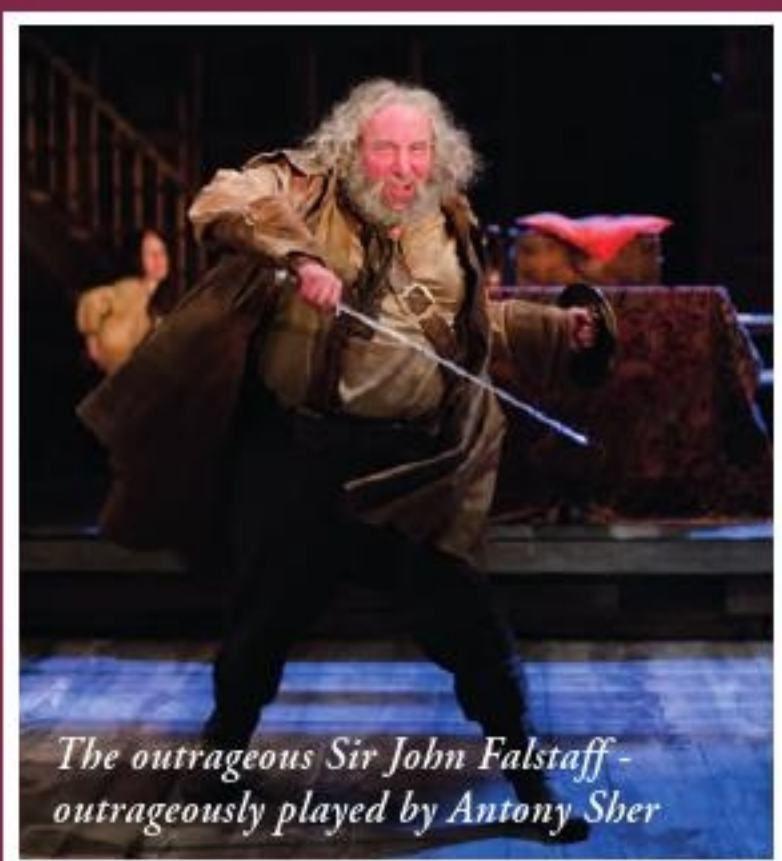
actor and playwright from Stratford upon Avon found the story of the Plantagenets such an obvious subject for eight of his most enduring dramas.

It also easy to see why Gregory Doran, on succeeding to the post of Artistic Director of the Royal Shakespeare Company, first announced his plan to produce *every one* of Shakespeare's plays over the next six years and then kicked off the project with *Richard II* in late 2013 and *Henry IV (Parts One and Two)* throughout the summer of 2014.

The sometimes tragic, often bloody, always compelling and indelibly intertwined story of these two kings is what Hollywood producers would call “SRO guaranteed”, certainly “sold right out” or very close to it, has been the case at the RST through the run of these plays so far - and deservedly so.

David Tennant (always SRO guaranteed these days, it seems) played Richard II last year and provided the perfect mix of pretty-boy posturing and petulance along with almost unspeakable arrogance one minute and then miserably abject pleading for release from the responsibilities of kingship and their consequences the next. If the capricious young Richard was anything like Tennant portrayed him, then it isn't difficult to see why Henry wanted him out of the way for good!

Richard II opens with the court in mourning for the murdered Duke of Gloucester and with Henry Bolingbroke, the son of John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, about to fight a 'trial by combat' with Thomas Mowbray, who Bolingbroke accuses of causing the murdered



*The outrageous Sir John Falstaff -
outrageously played by Antony Sher*

Duke's death. Before they can begin the fight, Richard intervenes and banishes both from the court and the kingdom - probably a clever piece of political expediency and self-protection as Richard himself was implicated in Gloucester's murder.

With Bolingbroke out of the way, Richard next takes the opportunity to seize his family's lands upon the death of his father, John of Gaunt, but this is a step too far, Bolingbroke returns to England, easily raises an army against the massively unpopular King and sets out to reclaim his birthright. The rest, as the saying goes, is history!

Doran's direction of the play was, as usual, impeccable and the good news is that, even though the show is over, the production is available on DVD, from either the RSC shop at Stratford or by mail order from the usual places.

And as the saying goes, "if you liked that one, you'll love this" - so I would also highly recommend purchasing the DVD Box Set of the superb BBC series entitled *The Hollow Crown*. This begins with *Richard II* (with Ben Wishaw in the title role), followed by both parts of *Henry IV* (starring Jeremy Irons) and culminating with Tom Hiddleston as *Henry V*. It's filmed in stunning locations and there are a host of big-name actors in the other roles, including Patrick Stewart, Simon Russell Beale, John Hurt, Julie Walters, Geraldine Chaplin, Lindsay Duncan, Geoffrey Palmer, Richard Griffiths, Rory Kinnear and David Suchet, to name but a few!

But now back to the RSC and *Henry IV, Part I*. The manner in which Bolingbroke usurped the crown did not sit well with some of the nobles of the land, even some of those who were undoubtedly glad to see Richard gone. So the play opens with rebellion in the air.

In particular, Henry was wary of the power of the Earl of Northumberland, head of the Percy family that essentially ruled the north of England as almost their personal fiefdom. The scion of the Percy family was the Earl's charismatic son Harry, known to all as 'Hotspur' and the comparison between the dashing young northerner and his own son was not one which Henry IV liked to think about.

Even with rebellion obviously in the offing, 'Prince Hal' was more intent on enjoying wine, women and no doubt even a song or two as well. And aiding and abetting the young Prince in his enjoyment of life in the taverns and bawdy houses of London's Eastcheap was Shakespeare's greatest comic creation, the wonderfully dissolute character of Sir John Falstaff.

Playing the part in this production is Antony Sher and he plays it to the max, joyously over-acting throughout and obviously enjoying every hilarious minute every bit as much as does the audience he is entertaining.

Richard II (David Tennant) takes a last look at his crown before relinquishing it to Henry Bolingbroke (Nigel Lindsay). Looking on is the Duke of York (Oliver Ford Davies)



Henry Bolingbroke (Nigel Lindsay) and Richard II (David Tennant) each have their hand on the crown of England. Soon it will be Bolingbroke's



You have until September 6th to see Sher's exuberant Falstaff at Stratford and I suggest you book right now. It is a performance not to be missed.

If, however, you do miss it at the RST, then all is not lost as both parts of *Henry IV* can be seen at the Theatre Royal in Bath from November 4th to the 8th. Or if you prefer an easy train ride to London rather than a wintertime night drive across the Cotswolds, then you have almost a couple of months to catch it at the Barbican between November 29th this year and January 24th next. But don't delay as I have a feeling that these tickets will also 'sell right out'.

By the end of *Henry IV, Part I* the young Prince Hal has pretty much sewn his wild oats and when open rebellion against his father does break out he forsakes wine and women and goes to war against the rebel forces led by Harry Hotspur. At the battle of Shrewsbury, Hal defeats the rebels and kills Hotspur. His reputation is restored and he takes the first steps on the road to becoming Henry the Fifth and England's most revered 'warrior king' (with much thanks due to some of Shakespeare's most famous speeches for this eventual status).

Before that, however, the opening scenes of *Henry IV, Part II*, finds Hal's father still beset by the fear of civil war as the Earl of Northumberland, angered by the death of his son, lends his weight and his private army to another revolution, this time led by the Archbishop of York.

Fearing that Hal is still too much influenced by Falstaff, the King sees to it that the old reprobate faces the threat of jail for his debts and generally criminal behaviour. So, under pressure from the Chief Justice, Falstaff agrees to get out of London and make a recruiting

expedition to Gloucestershire on behalf of the king, signing up soldiers to combat the new rebellion to come.

Once again we get the chance to laugh at Falstaff's antics, though not so slapstick this time. Instead we get to marvel at how Shakespeare has the cunning old character still manage to feather his own nest whilst on serious King's business.

Falstaff does so by taking bribes to allow a landowner friend keep his fittest men working on the farm and only send the weakest of them in body and mind off to the fight. "Falstaff's scarecrow army" is one description I have seen of his recruits - and it is a perfect one. Not content with just that scam, he then borrows a monstrous sum of money from his friend in return for guaranteeing him a place at the royal court and the promise of repaying him once Hal becomes king.

The play ends with the rebels again defeated by the king's forces, this time led by his younger son, Prince John. Henry and Prince Hal are re-united at the old king's deathbed and Hal gives up his life of carousing and sets his feet on the path to becoming perhaps Shakespeare's greatest hero.

So much so that when he accepts the crown at the end of *Henry IV* he cruelly rebuffs Falstaff and, in a moment of pure pathos perfectly portrayed by the erstwhile uber-comic Sher, his old friend is cold-shouldered by his former companion and told to go off and mend his ways. At that point we know that the transition from Prince Hal to King Henry the Fifth is complete. ♣

For more information on dates, times, locations and tickets go to the Royal Shakespeare Theatre website at www.rsc.org.uk or the Box Office Ticket Hotline on 0844 800 1110.



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COTSWOLD WALK IN THE FIVE VALLEYS OPENS FOR REGISTRATION

This year's Five Valleys Walk, Meningitis Now's flagship sponsored walk to raise funds to fight the disease, includes a unique opportunity to explore the Lynn Chadwick Sculpture Park in Stroud.

Set within the grounds of Lypiatt House, a beautiful Medieval and Tudor manor house, and normally for invited visitors only, Five Valleys Walk participants will celebrate the centenary of the sculptor's birth with stunning views of the surrounding countryside, as well as Chadwick's grand sculptures.

Elsewhere on the 21-mile circular walk the charity is organising entertainment, including circus acts, face painters and music.

The walk takes place on Sunday 28th September, passing through each of Stroud's five valleys - Painswick, Slad, Toadsmoor, Chalford and Nailsworth.

Walkers who sign up before the day pay just £10 per adult and £5 per child aged 16 and under. Family tickets for two adults and two children cost £25.

Those paying on the day pay slightly more. This entitles walkers to a free welcome pack, sponsor forms, a route map and certificate, and free fruit and water on the day.

This year's top individual fundraiser stands to win a hot air balloon flight courtesy of Bristol Balloons.

Meningitis Now exists to save lives and rebuild futures by funding research into vaccines and prevention. All of the money raised through the Five Valleys Walk is used to help fund the charity's fight against meningitis in the UK.

Registration for the event is now open - to find out more and to register online visit www.fivevalleyswalk.com or call 0845 120 4530.

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IN AID OF ACORNS CHILDREN'S HOSPICE TRUST

Last month Sugarswell Business Park hosted a charity hog roast and family fun day in aid of Acorns Children's Hospice Trust - supported by Warwickshire Freemasons. Organisers, Paul Regan, Toby Nunneley, and Hannah Nicholls were delighted to see local businesses, friends and family involved in making the event a great success. There was live music from *The Blue Meanies*, delicious ale by *CATS Brewing Co.*, homemade ice cream and cake stalls, locally sourced food provided by *Parkland Meat*, Shropshire sheep show, professional children's entertainers, face painting and more.

Paul Regan said, "It was such a great day and the event raised a total of £6,200 - which is absolutely fantastic. Sincere thanks to everyone involved, we couldn't be happier with the end result and are already planning for next year!"

Acorns Children's Hospice Trust and Warwickshire Freemason Grand Charity are registered charities offering care for people in need. Acorns support life limited and life threatened children and their families, across the heart of England. Warwickshire Freemasons' Grand Charity is committed to making financial grants available for charitable purposes, totalling over £100million.



1: grand presentation of the cheque, worth £6,200; 2: Cameo Consultancy had lucky dip tombola prize bags to raise money for the charity; 3: CATS Brewing Co directors, Hannah Bailey, with Tom Corfield & Chris Duxbury (www.catsbrewingco.com); 4: *The Blue Meanies*; 5: Jonny Detoef & Lee Gething; 6: Adam Rowland & Natasha Gething; 7: Claire Warmington & Rachel Mizen; 8: from left, organisers of the charity fun day, Paul Regan, director, Parkland Meat Company, Hannah Nicholls, Cameo Consultancy director, Toby Nunneley, Sugarswell landlord; 9: children enjoying the entertainment

OXFORDSHIRE BUSINESS AWARDS

Regional, rapidly-expanding and award-winning legal services provider Brethertons LLP is proud and delighted to announce their award win at the prestigious Oxfordshire Business Awards in the 'Customer Care' Category, sponsored by Hays Recruitment.

With judging criteria spanning topics such as the development of a culture of service excellence -including defined customer service standards, effective customer service provision, as well as an effective monitoring and complaints system and how effective customer care has benefitted Brethertons, its staff and its clients - winning the award is a high accolade indeed.

In April 2013, Brethertons assembled a new Client Services team in its pledge to achieve outstanding service and care for its clients. Since then Brethertons' commitment to customer care has been recognised by being shortlisted for an astounding 9 awards, with the most recent achievement being Highly Commended for the Lexcel Award for Excellence in Practice Management.

Partner and Head of Client Services, Alison McCormack, collected the award at the glittering gala dinner, held at The Oxford Thames Four Pillars Hotel, Sandford on



Thames in June. Alison said: "This is a fantastic achievement for Brethertons. Winning this award continues to demonstrate our commitment to delivering exceptional service on behalf of our clients."

Brethertons was also finalists in the 'The Shaw Gibbs Business Person of the Year

award', which acknowledged how Partner, Shaun Jardine, benefits the firm directly through his efforts. From raising Brethertons' profile and exceeding customer expectations, through to developing and implementing strategic business plans to achieve growth and improve profitability.

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VALUABLE PRACTICE INTERVIEWS

Volunteers from the Rotary Club of Banbury conducted practice interviews with students from Year 11 at Warriner School recently.



Students submitted their CVs and a practice letter for a job or course of instruction ahead of facing a panel of two interviewers during a 30 minute session. Interviewers then focused on gaining the student's confidence so that

they could talk as freely as possible about themselves, their interests, experience, skills and ambitions. Students were assessed and provided with appropriate feedback, all with a view to improving the future performance of these young individuals under interview conditions.

There is a competitive element to being interviewed for a job in real life, and this was replicated. The star interviewee received a £50 book token prize. This photo shows students invited for second interview this year, with Rotary interviewers and a Warriner teacher.



HEROES AND VILLAINS

School Governors hailed tomorrow's heroes and villains at Whitley Stimpson's first education conference

The education team from chartered accountants and business advisors, Whitley Stimpson, held its first education conference with the aim of empowering school governors to successfully run an Academy or a school looking to convert. Over 50 delegates from schools and Academies across the UK attended the conference at A Day In The Country near Banbury.

Guest speaker, Gerard Kelly, former editor of The Times Education Supplement, TES, wowed delegates with his controversial views on the current and future role of the UK's education system, saying: "School Governors will be tomorrow's heroes and villains. As the importance of their role is increasingly recognised by the government and Ofsted, they are bound to find themselves under the spotlight. This may be uncomfortable for some but I think it is inevitable and some undoubtedly will shine."

Whitley Stimpson's Head of Education, Martin Wyatt, took delegates on an insightful journey through the governance framework of Academies outlining the varying roles and responsibilities for Governors.

For useful resources visit www.whitleystimpson.co.uk or email academies@whitleystimpson.co.uk

from left: Andy Jones, Gerard Kelly (former editor of TES), John Skinner, Andrew Jeffrey, Kelly Lea, Martin Wyatt, Ann Simmonds and Gurpreet Dulay

MUSIC TO HONOUR THE BRAVE

Banbury Symphony Orchestra's evening of 'Music to Honour the Brave 1914-1918' paid tribute to those who fought in the First World War and was a moving finale to the town's Armed Forces Day in St Mary's Church recently. The concert raised almost £1,500 for ex-service charities.

Proceeds have been shared between the Royal British Legion (Banbury) and the local branch of the Army Benevolent Fund. Emma Callery, chairman of the orchestra committee, said: "Our summer concerts raise money for local good causes and we chose ex-service charities this year. 2014 is the 100th anniversary of the start of WWI - so we decided to commemorate those who fought in that war."

The concert was organised by the BSO in association with Banbury Town Council and the



Rotary Club of Banbury. Chris Smithson, chairman of the Royal British Legion's Banbury branch, said: "I would like to thank Banbury Symphony Orchestra and everyone else who helped organise the event in this commemorative year."

In the picture, the BSO's Richard Hartree (left) and cellist Peter Button (right) present the cheques to Kieren Mallon.

Mr Hartree is a french horn player who played with the BSO for 50 years. He retired from live performances after the WWI concert and is looking forward to being part of the audience instead of a member of the orchestra!



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GETTING DIVORCED IN LATER LIFE

With the rate of divorce in England and Wales steadily increasing among people over the age of 60, many are looking to solicitors for legal advice not just in relation to divorce and separation, but also when moving forwards with their lives into new relationships.

Whilst the process of divorce remains the same for any married couple, those in later life with greater assets, perhaps including a pension or mortgage-free property, may have more to consider from a financial perspective.

One party in a marriage may have taken a primary role in managing the couple's money, so there may be some difficulty in ensuring that both have a full and clear picture of their assets and liabilities. Expert assistance might be required at this stage, for example, early consultation with a solicitor or calling upon an estate agent to give guidance as to the value of the family home.

Once both parties are satisfied that they know how much is in the matrimonial "pot", the process of negotiation can begin and some couples are able to reach a swift and amicable solution for the benefit of all concerned.

When direct agreement proves difficult, however, there are other routes to settlement

that may offer a less confrontational way forward, without the need to go to court.

Mediation allows a couple to meet with a trained, neutral third party and discuss aspects of the breakdown of their relationship that they wish to address. Whilst mediators are unable to advise, they can provide information and cost-effective guidance through the process of financial disclosure referred to above.

For some divorcing couples, whatever their age, there may seem to be no alternative but an application to court to resolve financial matters. The court process offers the benefit of the court's timetable to move matters on but there is on-going encouragement for couples to reach their own financial agreement. While an application to court may seem potentially costly, it remains a necessary option when one party shows unwillingness to negotiate fairly and openly.

A rising number of clients who have entered into new relationships are enquiring into Pre-Marital Agreements, widely known as Pre-Nups. For some, this can be a welcome opportunity to discuss financial matters with their partner and prevent disputes arising after they are married. For others, this can lead to difficult discussions but may still help to protect their assets and families in future.



Obtaining specialist advice from a Family Lawyer at the earliest opportunity is always advisable. The Family Law team at Spratt Endicott offers free Options meetings that provide clients with information to help them consider their next steps. Options meetings can take place on the phone or face to face in Spratt Endicott's offices in Banbury and Brackley.

For more information, or to speak to one of our Family Law team, please contact Patrick Mulcare, Naheed Taj or Shelley De'Worringham on 01295 204000, or email familylaw@se-law.co.uk.

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high performance?

I often hear that pensions are not worthwhile, they do not perform well and cost too much. Then when you want your money you are restricted in choice. These arguments are ill-founded. Performance depends upon how the fund is invested and is nothing to do with pensions, costs are falling all the time and are much less than five years ago. The best time to start saving is right now, it takes a long time to accumulate sufficient to pay a lifetime income.

Now that the dust has settled after the whirlwind revelations about new pension options in the budget, it's worth looking at what is real. A great deal has been said in the media about the new freedoms but much of it has been less than accurate and headline seeking.

What the Chancellor announced was a relaxation of the retirement rules that constrained what an individual could do with their pension fund. From next April we will all be treated as adults who can be trusted to make sensible decisions about our financial future.

Alright, some might splash the lot on holidays and fast cars; I have not yet met anyone who is that improvident. People understand that their pension pots have to last their lifetime, and

they will not waste money that has built over many years.

Some people might well consider that annuities are right for them; others may wish to take more control. After April 2015 individuals will be able to take an income of their choice from their fund and Income Tax will be deducted as it is now. How will you know how much you can take without the fund running out too soon? Your adviser will be able to show you the outcome of your income and expenditure, projected into the future if they have access to cash flow modelling. This technique can help you plan for any events, known requirements with 'what-if' scenarios as you choose.

Above all else the message is that good advice is essential to help plan future income. The options are wide and you have the responsibility for your own finances. A good adviser will explain the choices you have and will help you to make the arrangements that are suitable for you.

What all this means for people saving for the future is that it is essential to build up a fund within a tax advantaged arrangement. Think of the alternative - no fund! Nothing then to buy the Lamborghini with!

Information provided by Ellacotts. For contact details please visit www.ellacotts.co.uk



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GRADUATE
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AWARD

A mature student from Banbury and Bicester College has fought off strong competition to win Textile Study Group's (TSG) Graduate of the Year 2014.

The judging panel chose Maria Boyle's work from hundreds of emerging graduate designers who were exhibiting their work at the New Designers show at the famous Business Design Centre, Islington.

Sarah Burgess from TSG explained why they chose to give the award to Maria:

"Maria's work shows a strong use of colour with a well-developed concept from sound research references. It is an extensive and sustained body of work. She has a passion for what she does and an ability to communicate with her audience."

Maria's 'Lichen Collection' refers to her love of the forest environment, fostered by childhood visits to her maternal family in Northern Sweden. The work is concerned with the migration of reindeer, along with the Sami herders from their mountain grazing lands towards the lichens of the life-sustaining forests.

Maria, who graduated with a BA (Hons) in Design Crafts from Banbury and Bicester College delivered in partnership with DeMontfort University said:

"I am absolutely thrilled to have won this award, and especially to have been selected from the pool of graduates at New Designers - it has still not really sunk in!"

More information about Maria's work can be found at www.mariaboyle.co.uk



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remembering... **TREVOR POLLOCK** *of 'Trev and Pete's Shearing Shed'*

Trevor, (at the back) Pete Tuzzio and Steve Kent in the Bridge Street barbers. The picture was taken in 1973/74



Banbury barber Trevor Pollock was well known to many in the Four Shires as 'Trev' of 'Trev and Pete's Shearing Shed'.

Trevor Pollock was born in Tadmarton near Banbury in 1948 and attended Sibford Primary School. From here he went on to Hook Norton School. He left Hook Norton to take up an apprenticeship with the Banbury barber Tim Lynott.

He worked at Lynotts up until 1970 where he built up a lasting friendship with fellow barber Michael Curran, visiting him often in later life at his Miami Home. In 1970, Trevor formed a partnership with Tim Lynott opening their own barber's shop - Lynott and Pollocks in Orchard Way in Banbury.

During that first year Trevor

attended a hairdressing competition in Coventry where a meeting with Peter Tuzzio, who at that time was working in Banbury for barbers 'Ralph and Tony', was to shape their future careers. Trevor commented to Peter that if ever a lease came up on suitable premises they should take it on.

In 1971 a lease became available on what was a 'Smith's' shop in Bridge Street in Banbury and Trevor went into partnership with Pete, setting up their first barbers together.

In 1980 they bought the building and operated there successfully until, in 1996, the shop was compulsory purchased for the development of the Castle Quay site and the widening of Bridge Street. Trev and Pete were the last to move.

Trev and Pete's Shearing Shed moved to their current premises in Bridge Street 18 years ago.

During his 50 years as a barber, Trevor Pollock helped train many other barbers in the area and amused them with stories of how he practised his 'scissor over comb' technique on his pet dog Andy when he was learning the trade.

He was very well known to many in Banbury. His daughters Donna and Hayley commenting that they dreaded shopping in Banbury with their dad because a short shopping trip could take hours, as Trevor would stop and chat with all the friends he knew. Once, on a family holiday in Florida, the family were only a little surprised when an American on the trip struck up a conversation telling how

Trevor used to cut his hair!

As a child Trevor contracted polio. Following many childhood operations he was left with a slight disability. This never got in the way of a very active social life and Trevor's mother, Beatrice, who lived in Tadmarton, was always wary when he went out causing mischief with his good friend Michael.

In later life, Trevor was a member of the London Marylebone freemasons' lodge serving a term as Grand Master.

Trevor was married to Jean, who he met at Hook Norton School. He married her in 1970. Jean passed away in 2004.

Trevor's three children, Donna, Hayley and Ben, and one grandson Sam, all live locally.

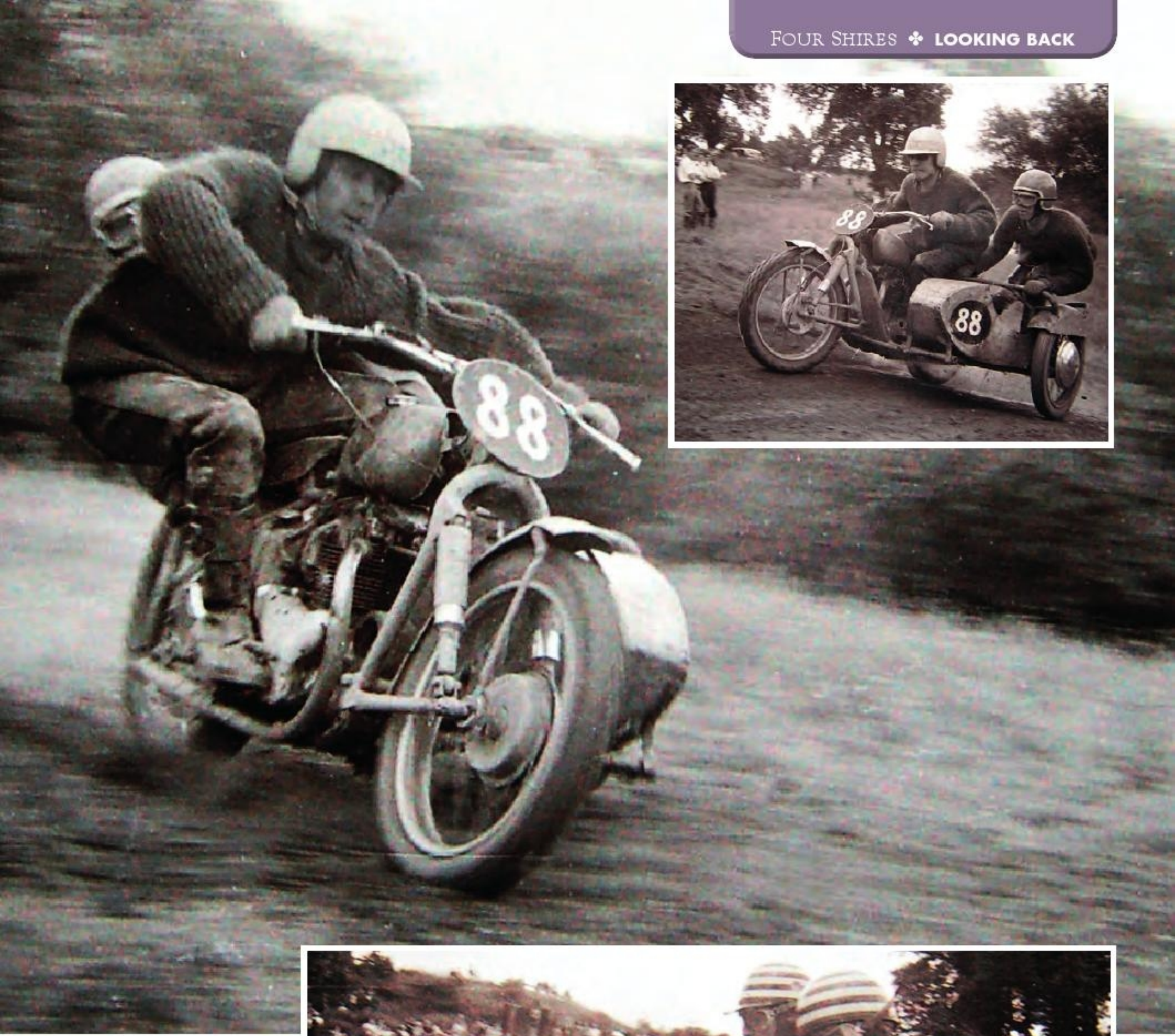
PICTURES FROM THE PAST



These pictures date from July 1965 and show Pete Murray attending Bloxham fete. We think the fete was held on the Courtington Lane in Bloxham.

Pete Murray was at that time a very famous BBC radio personality and it must have been quite a coup to get him to attend the fete. He is seen in pictures signing autographs and entertaining quite a large crowd in the fields behind Courtington Lane.

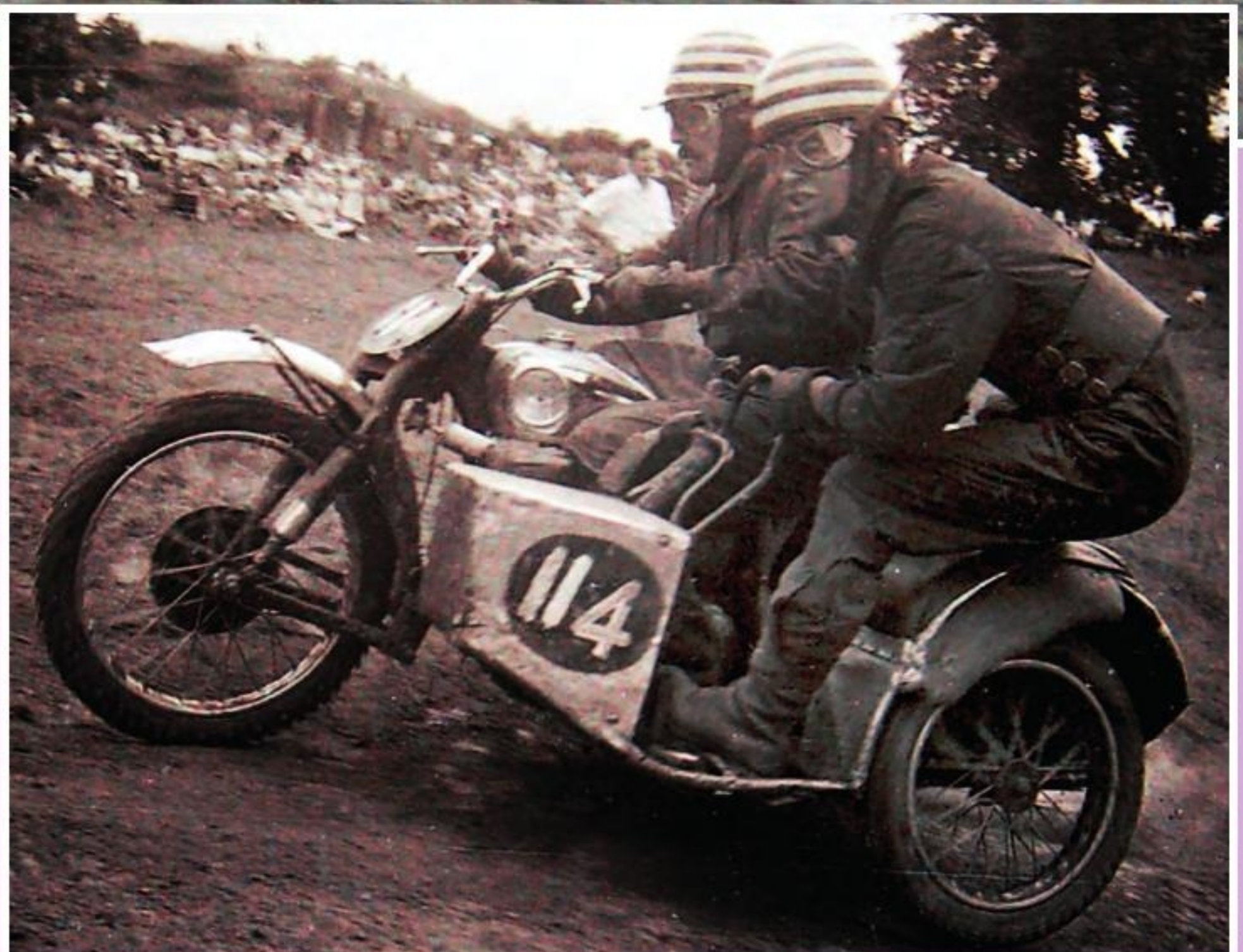




These motorcycle pictures date from 1964 and show some motorcycle and sidecar scrambles taking place.

We aren't sure of the venue as there were many in the Four Shires' area back in the 60s.

We think that the motorcycle number 88 had a Triumph engine, but aren't quite so sure about the other bike. Of course, back in the 60s motorcycling in the UK was dominated by British made bikes...the Japanese motorcycle revolution was just around the corner!



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Opal Barn Salon, Burcote Wood Farm Business Park, near Towcester



A change for the good

On 30th May 2013 the Government introduced changes to the General Permitted Development Order (GPDO) with the aim of making it easier for businesses to make use of existing commercial properties by relaxing the rules on changes of use.

The previous system meant that if a business wanted to make use of an existing property, but their business did not fit in with the existing Use Class of the property, they would be required to submit a full planning application, which may take up to eight weeks to determine and cost £375 in application fees, plus any other consultation fees, and there would be no guarantee that the application would be successful. Understandably, this could put a significant brake on commercial enterprise development.

The new system allows for changes of use for a temporary period of two years, subject to a prior notification application which takes twenty-eight days, and costs £75. At the end of the two year period the use will revert to the previous use class unless the applicant submits a new application to justify the change as permanent. At this point, the new business should be established and should be able to justify the change in a much more straightforward application, with significantly less risk.

An example of where this is already working in practice is Burcote Wood Farm Business Park, near Towcester. Fisher German has been letting agent to the park for some time. The units are a mixture of converted modern and traditional farm buildings and have a wide range of



Amy Hutsby

occupiers from the motorsport industry to upholstery businesses and web design to name a few.

Earlier this year a unit became available in one of the traditional barns. Becky Robinson from Pattishall, near Towcester, was looking for somewhere to open a new salon business and the Business Park seemed the ideal location. However, the building in question was classed as B1 Business, rather than A1 Retail. Under the new permitted development rights, with guidance from Fisher German, the owner of the Park, Richard Cook, was able to change the use class. Opal Barn (the new name for the salon) has been up and running for four months now and is a real asset

to the Business Park and the area, offering hair and beauty treatments, in an attractive rural location within easy reach of Towcester and the surrounding areas. Since the initial opening day Becky has not had a quiet moment and is regularly fully booked.

Should you have any queries on Permitted Development Rights and how they might apply to your property, please do not hesitate to call Amy Hutsby on 01295 226296 or email amy.hutsby@fishergerman.co.uk

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SHIPSTON COUNTRY WALKS

We've given Peter the month off this time as we have been sent a super little book of walks centred around 'Shipston Country'. The book features 20 circular walks around Shipston on Stour, Warwickshire and gives detailed descriptions of the towns, villages and other places of interest in the area. Each book sold raises funds for Shipston Home Nursing.

The book has been put together by Peter Titchmarsh, in memory of his wife, Janet, who was looked after by the Shipston Home and Community nursing teams.

The walks in the guide vary in length, starting with shorter routes, moving on to larger ones that should take the average walker around four hours to complete. Each walk has a little illustration to accompany the route, and the appropriate OS map reference is included in the description. There are up to half a dozen colour pictures included in each walk guide. Inside the front cover there is a good map that shows the location of the starting point for each walk.

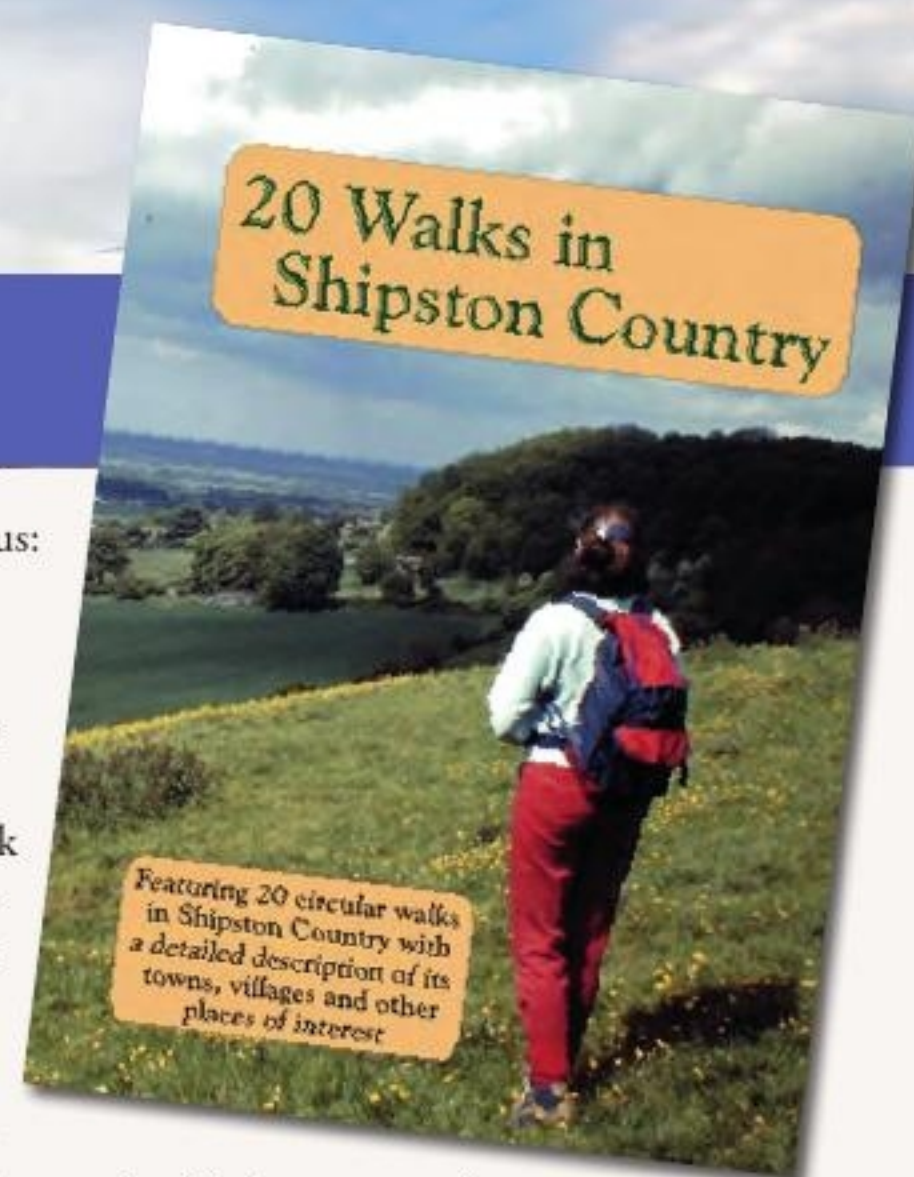


Peter Titchmarsh introduces the guide thus:

'Perhaps you have not heard the name 'Shipston Country' before? However, the area in which Shipston lies is so attractive that you are certain to hear it often mentioned in the future. If this guidebook is judged partially responsible, the author makes no apology. But he should, at least explain himself.

What is 'Shipston Country'? It is centred upon the attractive little market town of Shipston on Stour. This is itself about midway between the source of the Stour in the hills above the Sibfords and its confluence with the Avon below Stratford upon Avon. This delightful little river is the principal feature of 'Shipston Country's' northern half, while the southern half along with much of its western fringes merges into Cotswold Country. Many of the villages to the east of the Stour valley lie in low, rolling country which runs to the northern edge of the beautiful but under rated Oxfordshire Cotswolds, parts of which also lie in 'Shipston Country'. To the west are the northern ramparts of the classic Cotswolds, amongst which are several 'Shipston Country' villages.

...While this guidebook's main objective is to offer a series of entertaining walks together with detailed information on 'Shipston Country', it is also hoped to help raise funds for Shipston Home Nursing (registered Charity No 10614505) whose vitally important work is funded almost entirely by charitable donations. We shall



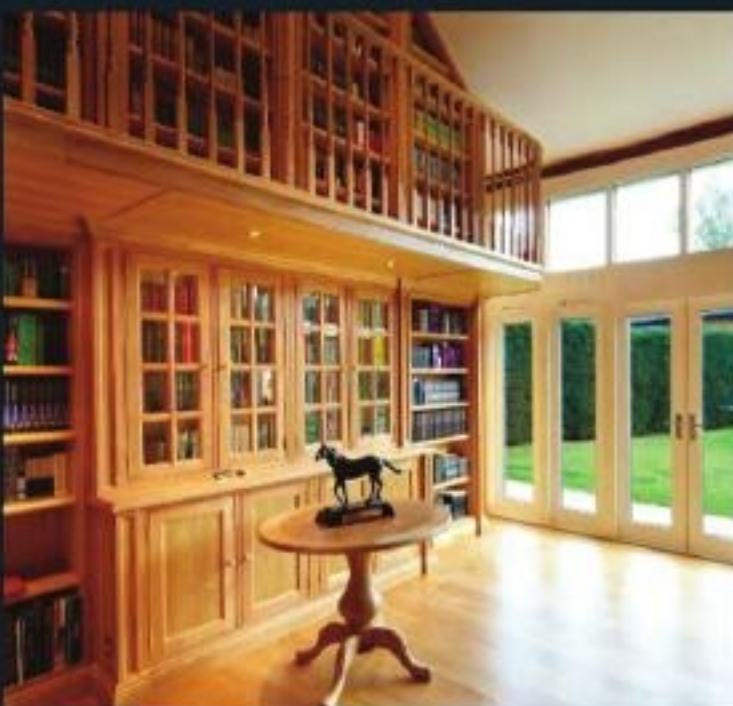
do this by encouraging walkers to raise funds by obtaining sponsorship from friends, relatives and work colleagues and we shall also pass all proceeds on the sale of this guidebook to the same organisation...

20 Walks in Shipston Country is published by The Macmillan Way Association on behalf of Shipston Home Nursing. ISBN 0-9526851-7-5





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